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THE ULTIMATE
ROUTE 66 ROAD TRIP

TRAVELER

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JUNE/JULY 2016

Taste of Summer

Food festivals!
Tempting trails! Perfect picnics!

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15

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Colombian Coffee
Saucy Manila



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The best adventures—the ones that leave you fulfilled and excited—are not built on someone else's itinerary. No, the trips that leave a mark are the ones that speak directly to your sense of adventure. That's why writer David Gonzales invited a few of his friends to Bozeman, Montana, to see if they could combine their passions into one epic day in the mountains. Because when you build your adventure in Montana, you can fit a lot in before dinner.



Watch them bike, swim and climb in Montana, and see what awaits you, at VISITMT.COM.

MONTANA

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FOLLOW NATGEOTRAVEL



VOLUME 33, NUMBER 3

Hot chocolate worth scraping the bottom of the cup for in Bayonne, France (page 60).

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My City: Reykjavik

Split personalities reign in Iceland's capital: cosmopolitan with a village feel, isolated but bustling, and weather extremes by day and night.

BY HALLGRÍMUR HELGASON

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Eat the World

We're letting our taste buds lead the way as we tour the world in search of five flavors. Sample sweet chocolate in France, sip strong cups of coffee in Colombia, savor Sonoma's pork and cheese bounty, snack on salty potato chips with global flavors, and taste sour street food in the Philippines.

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State of Wonder in Denali

As part of our yearlong national parks celebration, we visit Alaska's Denali National Park, a wild backcountry of six million acres sure to surprise any traveler.

BY JEFF RENNICKE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
AARON HUEY



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Editor's Note



Munch your way through Hong Kong's markets.

With each bite we take a journey. Taste, perhaps more than any other sensation, is our invitation to voyage, our most nourishing entrée to global engagement. As hungry travelers know, food is an excellent guide and curiosity is all that's required to inspire an itinerary that can change how we explore the world. In this issue, we tour some of the planet's most delicious destinations, from Sonoma to Manila to Colombia, to savor the intermingling of taste and place. Our feast features five key flavors—savory, sour, sweet, salty, and bitter—and yummy revelation.

At National Geographic, we think of travel not as a peripheral experience but as a primary tool for exchange. When we allow food to guide our journeys, we risk a portion of control for the rewards of discovery. These rewards can expand our world and illuminate our minds with meaningful engagements, a bit like Proust's madeleine,

that emblem of memory. We've even tucked a plate of madeleines into this issue.

Edible itineraries reward both body and soul, but a seat at the table is the essential ingredient. Our goal is not only to encourage cultural foraging but to provide insight and access so that tempting experiences can become satisfying realities. For this, we rely on our edacious network of writers and photographers. When longtime *Traveler* contributor Daisann McLane isn't crafting articles, she's guiding explorers on moveable feasts with her company Little Adventures in Hong Kong (featured in "15 Fabulous Food Tours," page 77). "Food isn't just something you eat and enjoy," she says. "It's a universal language of flavors, tones, and textures that everyone can speak. Just walk into a restaurant, order what you see people eating, and let your adventure begin."

GEORGE W. STONE
Editor in Chief

Highlights Across National Geographic

@NATGEOTRAVEL

Could you be our 2016 Travel Photographer of the Year? Enter your best shots at natgeotravel.com, and follow @NatGeoTravel to stay tuned to the winner announcement in early July.

MUSEUM

Starting June 1, National Geographic's Washington, D.C., museum will be invaded by the Greeks. At "The Greeks: Agamemnon to Alexander the Great" exhibit, visitors can see more than 550 artifacts. Check out events.nationalgeographic.com for more.

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

France now has its own *National Geographic Traveler* quarterly magazine—which we recommend reading with a croissant in hand.

EXPEDITIONS

Ready to plan your next travel adventure? National Geographic Expeditions just released a new catalog of trips, filled with global itineraries that will get you packing. For a copy or to book, visit natgeoexpeditions.com.

59 PARKS IN 52 WEEKS

National Geographic photographer Jonathan Irish is celebrating the National Park Service's 100th anniversary by paying a visit to all 59 national parks in one year. Follow along on his picturesque adventures at natgeo.com/59in52.

THE PLATE

Ready for seconds? National Geographic's food blog, The Plate, features an array of appetizing stories from around the world. theplate.nationalgeographic.com.



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Notebook

A JOURNAL FOR THE SAVVY TRAVELER

Stomping Grounds

Even as Route 66 celebrates its 90th, there's no end of the road for this iconic stretch of asphalt.

SEE ROAD TRIP ON NEXT PAGE



Prehistoric pit stop
along Route 66 in
Holbrook, Arizona

Istanbul, Turkey

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HOME OF THE BLUE MOSQUE



The 1940s-era Blue Swallow Motel, in Tucumcari, New Mexico, features a garage with almost every room.

ROAD TRIP

American Milestone

Revvving up at 90, Route 66 still has plenty of kicks

Route 66 cruises into its 90th year this November, and its future looks as bright as its neon past. Signs of a Route 66 resurgence include California's new Mojave Trails National Monument, which protects more than 105 miles of what, in *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck called the mother road. Restorations, such as the Boots Court project in Carthage, Missouri, and Albuquerque's El Vado Auto Court Motel, which transforms into a multiuse space in 2017, are taking place along its 2,400 miles, from Chicago to Santa Monica.

Eighty-five percent of the original Route 66, which was first commissioned in 1926, is still drivable. Small businesses along the way, including Tee Pee Curios in Tucumcari, New Mexico, and the L Motel in Flagstaff, Arizona, still look as they did in their retro heydays thanks to grants from the National Park Service's Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program. The program was set to end in 2009, but has been extended through 2019. Afterward, new nonprofit Route 66: The Road Ahead aims to keep the path alive for years to come.

Tour companies from as far away as Queensland offer Route 66 excursions, and mother road-centric festivals kick off from Springfield, Illinois, to Stuttgart, Germany, this summer and fall.

"The number of people traveling Route 66 rises yearly, many of them foreign visitors ready to experience the road trip of a lifetime," says Michael Wallis, author of *Route 66: The Mother Road* and the voice of Sheriff in Pixar's *Cars*. "Route 66 is still the greatest way to see America." —STEVE LARESE



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CHECKING IN

Cutting-Edge Vienna

The Austrian capital rethinks city hotels

GRAND FERDINAND HOTEL

ELEGANT BUT NOT STUFFY

The challenge: Transform a stark, 1950s office building into a luxury hotel on Vienna's elegant Ringstrasse. The Grand Ferdinand succeeds by embracing the building's clean lines, while adding Viennese touches such as oversize crystal chandeliers and the type of hand-painted floor tiles you'd find in a well-to-do Viennese apartment. The result: unstuffy opulence that fuses mid-century simplicity and Austro-Hungarian finery. From \$200. grandferdinand.com

WIENER GÄSTE ZIMMER

SLEEP IN A FACTORY

Working the late shift isn't such a bad idea at this family-run factory that also offers five guest rooms on an upper floor. The company produces small-batch vinegars, cooking oils, and more. Guests learn about the process that turns fruits and grains into sought-after elixirs, and can sign on for a city tour of craft-based factories and markets. After, unwind in industrial-chic spaces with indulgent bedding and porcelain washbasins. From \$200 including breakfast. gegenbauer.at

GRÄTZL HOTEL

FOR ULTIMATE URBAN INSIDERS

Repurposed storefronts once occupied by lampshade makers, electricians, and bakers have found new life as contemporary guest rooms with décor inspired by tools of the trade: a vintage Pfaff sewing machine in a former dressmaker's shop, for instance. Check-in is at the local café. Since opening in 2011, this galvanizing and popular lodging concept now offers 21 rooms, spread out over three city districts, with plans to expand to 50 rooms. From \$133. gratzlhotel.com



Grand Ferdinand's rooftop pool provides a lofty view of Vienna's Ringstrasse.

REPORTED BY MARK BAKER

A man and a woman are seated at a round table with a white tablecloth in a vineyard. The woman is wearing a long, flowing white dress, and the man is wearing a light-colored suit. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The table is set with wine glasses, plates, and a small basket. The vineyard is lush with green leaves, and a dirt path leads through the rows of vines towards the background. In the distance, there are rolling hills and a large tree on the left. The sky is bright and hazy, suggesting a warm, sunny day.

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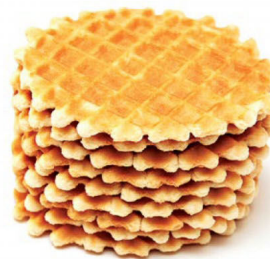
Batter Up in Belgium

Sweeten your European itinerary with a trip to waffle country

BRUSSELS The Brussels waffle, which debuted at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair, is the forefather of America's Belgian waffle. But they aren't the same—the Belgium capital's is more of a snack, often covered in strawberries and whipped cream or chocolate. The yeast version (America's is yeast free) is available at any waffle stand but is best fresh off the iron at 187-year-old Maison Dandoy on Rue au Beurre—Butter Street.

LIÈGE East of Brussels, in Belgium's Wallonia region, waffles lose the square shape to become an amorphous pressed-dough delight called the “Liège waffle.” The recipe, also yeast-based, is infused with pearl sugar that forms a crispy caramelized coating in the waffle iron. Pollux, a café off the Place de la Cathédrale, melts a chocolate bar right into the batter, but the plain sugar option is just as tasty.

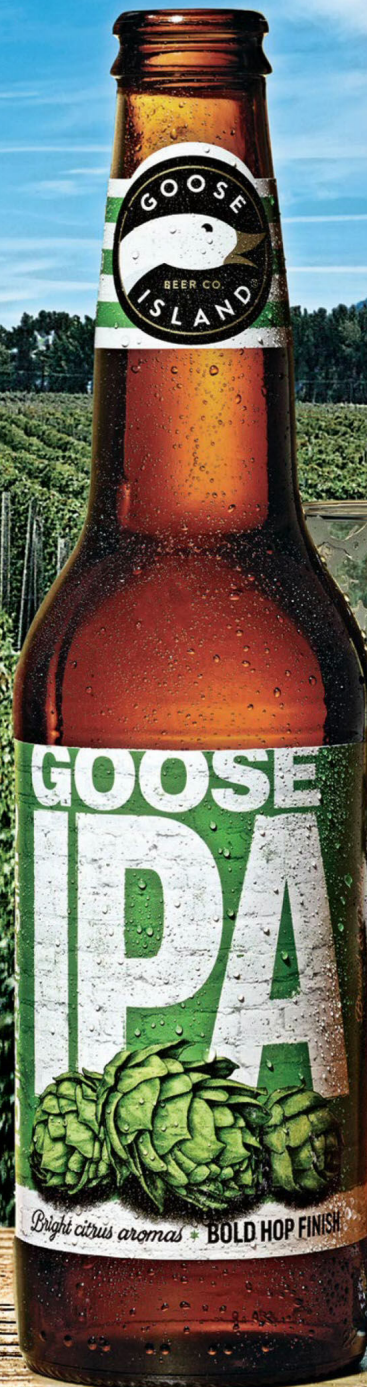
BELGIUM-WIDE Small, buttery waffle cookies are known by a few names depending on the region: *lukken*, good luck cookies, or *nieuwjaarswafeltjes*, New Year's cookies. Recipes are passed down through family, and the treat is traditionally served on New Year's. They look like their larger cousins on the surface but are thin and crunchy and, if two are put together, hold fillings like caramel, chocolate, ice cream, or almond paste.



Stack of waffle cookies, sometimes referred to in Belgium as *lukken*, meaning luck. Topping overload (above) near the Grand Place in Brussels.

DESTINATION: GREAT HOPS

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State Fares

ILLUSTRATION BY BROSMIND



fluffernutter fest to a garlic gathering in California (breath mints recommended). Check out natgeotravel.com for bite-size blurbs on each festival.

18. Vermont: Vermont Maple Festival, April
31. Massachusetts: What the Fluff? Festival, September
32. Rhode Island: Block Island Chowda' Fest, May
33. Connecticut: Milford Oyster Festival, August
34. New York: Peppermint Days, July

MID-ATLANTIC
35. Pennsylvania: McClure Bean Soup Festival, September
36. D.C.: Truckeroo, monthly from April through September
37. New Jersey: Trenton Pork Roll Festival, May
38. Maryland: Old Bay Festival, June
39. Delaware: Bridgeville Apple Scrapple Festival, October
40. Virginia: Taste of Brunswick Festival and Brunswick Stew Cook-Off, October
41. West Virginia: Preston County Buckwheat Festival, September and October

SOUTH
42. Kentucky: World Chicken Festival, September
43. South Carolina: World Grits Festival, April
44. North Carolina: Smithfield Ham & Yam Festival, May
45. Tennessee: International Biscuit Festival, May
46. Arkansas: Atkins Pickle Fest, May
47. Mississippi: World Catfish Festival, March
48. Louisiana: Oak Street Po-Boy Festival, November
49. Alabama: Peanut Boil Festival, September
50. Georgia: Georgia Peach Festival, June
51. Florida: Key Lime Festival, July

NORTHEAST
28. Maine: Wilton Blueberry Festival, August
29. New Hampshire: Milford Pumpkin Festival, October

MIDWEST & GREAT PLAINS
14. North Dakota: Norsk Høstfest, September
15. Minnesota: Wild Rice Festival, September
16. South Dakota: Buffalo Wallow Chili Cook-off, October
17. Iowa: Blue Ribbon Bacon Festival, February
18. Wisconsin: Czech & Kolache Festival, August
19. Michigan: National Cherry Festival, July
20. Ohio: Ohio Pawpaw Festival, September
21. Indiana: Mitchell Persimmon Festival, September
22. Illinois: Shrimp Festival, September
23. Nebraska: Kool-Aid Days, August
24. Kansas: Lenexa Spinach Festival, September
25. Missouri: American Royal World Series of Barbecue, May
26. Oklahoma: Tabouleh Fest, May
27. Texas: Wursthfest (New Braunfels), November

WEST
1. Washington: Wenatchee River Salmon Festival, September
2. Oregon: Oregon Berry Festival, July
3. California: Gilroy Garlic Festival, July
4. Idaho: Idaho Spud Day, September
5. Nevada: Las Vegas Greek Food Festival, October
6. Utah: Utah State Fair Funeral Potatoes Contest, September
7. Arizona: Yuma Lettuce Days, February
8. Wyoming: Elkfest, May
9. Montana: Trout Creek Huckleberry Festival, August
10. Colorado: Great American Beer Festival, October
11. New Mexico: Viva New Mexico Chile Festival, September
12. Alaska: Kodiak Crab Festival, May
13. Hawaii: Kona Coffee Festival, November

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MIDWEST & GREAT PLAINS

NORTHEAST

28. Maine: Wilton
Blueberry Festival, August
29. New Hampshire:
Milford Pumpkin Festival,
October

MID-ATLANTIC

SOUTH

42. **Kentucky:** World Chicken Festival, September
43. **South Carolina:** World Griots Festival, April
44. **North Carolina:** Smithfield Ham & Yam Festival, May
45. **Tennessee:** International Biscuit Festival, May
46. **Arkansas:** Atkins Pickle Fest, May
47. **Mississippi:** World Catfish Festival, March
48. **Louisiana:** Oak Street Po-Boy Festival, November
49. **Alabama:** Peanut Boil Festival, September
50. **Georgia:** Georgia Peach Festival, June
51. **Florida:** Key Lime Festival, July



ON LOCATION

PARK IT HERE

*Grab your lunch
and go*

South Africa's Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden (above), a spectacle of rugged wilds turned into a refined space on the slopes of Table Mountain, provides a green escape from Cape Town for a picnic lunch. Pack a bottle of wine from Stellenbosch and some biltong (it's like beef jerky, and a lot easier to carry than crocodile meat or ostrich burgers)—and hike the trails through forests and *fynbos* ("fine bush" or shrubland in Afrikaans). More than 7,000 plant species, many of them indigenous, are cultivated in this expansive garden, with exhibit areas dedicated to medicinal and fragrant plants, as well as king protea, South Africa's prickly pink, grapefruit-size national flower.

Prime picnic spots across the globe

ROME, ITALY
Villa Borghese Gardens

Savor an English-style garden in the Eternal City

PARIS, FRANCE
Jardin des Tuileries

People-watch on the perimeter of the Louvre

PERU
Huayna Picchu

See a panorama of Machu Picchu

NEW ZEALAND
Milford Sound

Dine among the South Island's fjords

SINGAPORE
Singapore Botanic Gardens

Kick back in a tropical rain forest in the heart of a busy city

CALIFORNIA
Point Reyes National Seashore

Explore a coastal nature preserve located on a 70,000-acre peninsula

HAWAII
Haleakala National Park

Watch the sunrise on the summit of Maui's Haleakala volcano

IRELAND
Aran Islands

Enjoy limestone landscapes and landmark monasteries

WASHINGTON, D.C.
National Sculpture Garden

Snack among works by Calder and Oldenburg on the National Mall



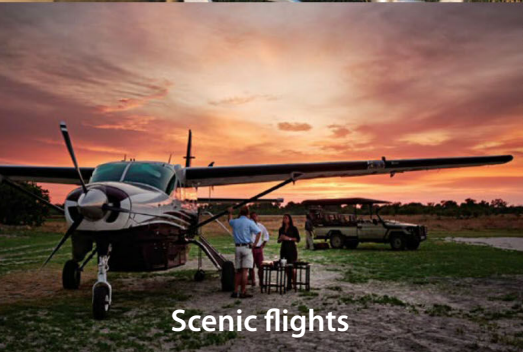
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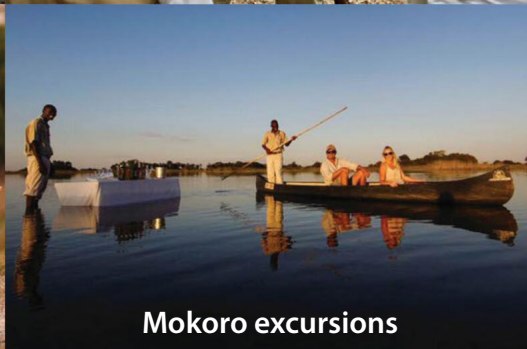
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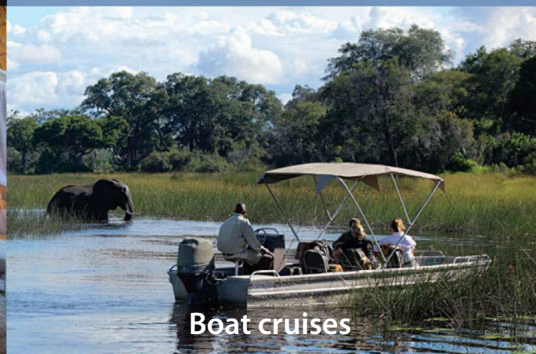
Birding safaris



Horseback safaris



Luxury tours



Boat cruises

A taste of Botswana

1000

The Okavango Delta
has been declared
the 1000th UNESCO
World Heritage site



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NAT GEO EXPEDITIONS

An Appetite Abroad

Spice up your travels with these interactive food experiences



OUTBACK TO BASICS

BUSH FARE IN AUSTRALIA

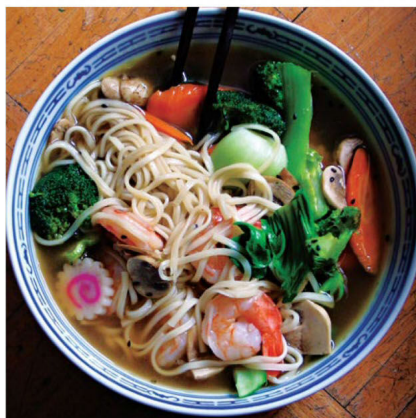
Though quandongs and ribberries sound like creations from Willy Wonka's factory, they're actually indigenous foods in Australia's outback. At Longitude 131°, one of the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World, National Geographic guests can watch executive chef Sara Rezgoui create a traditional, seasonal bush meal similar to those eaten by Anangu people. Dig in to dinner at a starlit table on the dunes, with a view of Uluru.



NAVIGATING THE MAIZE

TORTILLAS IN COSTA RICA

Vacations are a time to get away from the daily grind, unless it involves milling corn for tortillas at a family's home in La Fortuna, Costa Rica. During National Geographic Journeys' "Natural Highlights of Costa Rica" tour, guests prepare and cook masa on a wood-fired stove under the guidance of local maize matriarch Doña Mara. Feast on *casado*, a Costa Rican staple dish with black beans and plantains, served with your own corn-based creations.



USE YOUR NOODLE

UDON IN JAPAN

On the island of Shikoku, at Japan's famous Nakano Udon School, creating slurp-worthy udon noodles involves a bit of toe-tapping. On the "Inside Japan" itinerary from National Geographic Expeditions, knead the dough—enveloped in plastic bags—by foot to the beat of tambourines. When the dance interlude ends, learn how to roll, cut, and boil the noodles before devouring them in broth for lunch in order to regain your two-stepping strength.

—HANNAH SHEINBERG

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At Bodh Gaya, India, a fig tree such as this one shaded Buddha on his journey to enlightenment.



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BODH GAYA, BIHAR, INDIA

The spiritual hub of Buddhism is India's Bodh Gaya, whose famous fig tree was said to have sheltered Siddhartha Gautama as he meditated for seven days during his quest for enlightenment. Today, the tree (a descendant of the original) and the nearby pyramid-shaped Mahabodhi Temple are among Buddhism's holiest sites.

ST. PAUL TRAIL, TURKEY

This rugged 310-mile path partly follows

St. Paul's journey to spread Christianity. Leading from Perg or Aspendos to Antioch, the route forges past fragrant pine forests and mirage-like lakes.

ROUTE OF SAINTS, KRAKOW, POLAND

Wawel Hill features a 14th-century cathedral with 19 chapels and an ornate cluster of tombs, including one of Poland's patron, St. Stanislaus. See embroidered scenes from his life on a 500-year-old robe displayed in the cathedral museum.

On foot, follow Krakow's Route of Saints, which links 16 beautiful churches.

ELEANOR CROSSES, ENGLAND

When Edward I's wife, Eleanor of Castile, died of a fever in 1290, he had her body carried 108 miles south, from Lincoln to London, for the funeral, ordering crosses to be built wherever the cortege rested. One even gave its name to London's official center, Charing Cross.

ST. PATRICK'S FOOTSTEPS, IRELAND

To retrace St. Patrick's steps, you can either retreat to the island of Lough Derg, or climb—barefoot is the custom—Croagh Patrick. But other associated sites require less effort, such as the Northern Irish town of Downpatrick, which houses the saint's grave and a museum exhibition on his life and legacy.

P R O M O T I O N

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-  **Win it:** The winner will be announced in mid-August on nationalgeographic.com/myaway. Visit the website to view entries and the Grand Prize-winning photograph!



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Shredding swells in
the Houston Ship
Channel in Galveston
Bay, Texas

ADVENTURE

Surf's Up, Slick

Ride an oil-tanker wave in Texas

To an elite group of surfers, the Texas oil rush means a spike of adrenaline from riding a three-mile wave. During the sweltering summer months in Galveston, in-the-know surfers head to the 50-mile-long Houston Ship Channel, where dozens of vessels churn through one of the country's busiest ports each week. Here, cresting waves that come off the hulking ships don't break like they do on shore. Once a well-positioned oil tanker chugs past, surfers jump from their boat into the sea to catch a wave unlike any other. Some have even scored 20-minute rides.

"For the first couple of minutes you're

blown away by what you're doing," says Captain James Fulbright, the founder of Tanker Surf Charters. "Then you settle in and start realizing that you've discovered another dimension in surfing."

Fulbright, who owns a local surf shop, noticed the tankers created serious swells after meeting a sailor in 1994 whose boat had been swamped by a "rogue wave" coming off a passing ship. "I immediately went out and bought a boat," Fulbright recalls. He and a few friends kept their spot secret for years, but in 2003, after a proposition from filmmaker Dana Brown, Fulbright introduced tanker surfing to the public in the documentary *Step Into Liquid*.

In 2009, Fulbright launched Tanker Surf Charters, which brings small groups into the channel twice a week in the summer. To avoid overcrowding, Fulbright has taken out only a few hundred experienced surfers, though he argues that it's safer than near the shore since his boat picks up riders after the wave, however many miles later that is. "It's the longest wave in North America as far as I know," says Fulbright.

Toast to a day of surfing in Galveston at the Spot, where five connected food and drink venues cater to lively crowds. For a calmer nightcap, try the rooftop bar at the Tremont House, a 19th-century hotel that's hosted six presidents.

ERICH SCHLEGEL

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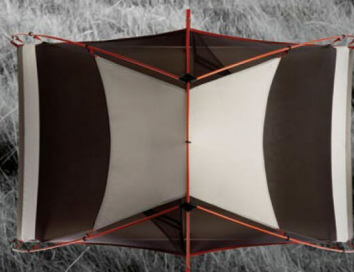
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YOUR SHOT

Taking Flight

Swinging at sunrise in Thailand's mountains

Chiang Rai, in the northern hill country of Thailand, isn't satisfied with any old playground swing set. Girls from the province's Akha tribe, pictured here in traditional dress, take turns on their handcrafted swing. Constructed during a four-day Swing Festival, held every year, these wooden swings symbolize freedom for the villagers.

"I wanted to capture the moment when the girl was above the mountains, as if she were trying to reach the sun," says photographer and National Geographic Your Shot member Prasad Ambati, who attempted a few rides himself. "Not many kids in that generation are so close to nature like this."

What do we love about this image? "It evokes a sense of childhood shared across cultures and the world," says *Traveler's* director of photography, Anne Farrar. "It brings back memories of how, when your feet lift off the ground, it feels a little bit like flying. For a split second, gravity gives way and you inhale the sweet breeze of summer."

The IRELAND of Your Dreams



The Emerald Isle's untamed beauty, wondrous landscapes, rich culture, and legendary hospitality are here for travelers to experience along two iconic coastal routes.

The Wild Atlantic Way

Explore the best of the west along the **Wild Atlantic Way**, the world's longest coastal touring route, extending some 1,500 miles from **Donegal** in the north to **Kinsale** along the southern coast. It's where the land's end meets the Atlantic, with breathtaking views of crashing waves and spectacular cliffs.



Journey a stretch or the whole length of this "road at the edge of the world," dotted with beautiful little villages and historic landmarks as it snakes through nine counties along Ireland's western seaboard.

Stop in the laid-back town of **Sligo**, built along the **Garavogue River**, where shops, pubs, and artisanal restaurants line the narrow streets and riverbanks. Sligo is Yeats country (as in William Butler Yeats), and a walking tour leads to the poet's memorial as well as to a **13th-century abbey**, **Sligo Cathedral**, and other sites.



Connemara, the iconic "wild heart" of Ireland, is the country's largest Gaelic-speaking region and a great place to engage the locals over a pint, traditional music, and rounds of storytelling. Explore the old seaside towns, countryside, and castles in and around **Clare** and its charming county town of **Ennis**, where winding medieval streets packed with cafés and pubs feature live music almost every night of the week.

Causeway Coastal Route

The picturesque **Causeway Coastal Route** between the cities of **Belfast** and **Derry-Londonderry** in Northern Ireland is a kaleidoscope of natural landscapes, imposing cliffs, bubbling mountain streams, and magnificent beaches. The route starts in Belfast, the Titanic capital of the universe, and takes you through **Larne**, the gateway to the nine **Glens of Atrim**—glacier-gouged valleys of seaside

villages and highlands of coniferous forests, bogland, and waterfalls. The route continues to its namesake geological formations of the **Giants Causeway**, where some 40,000 stone columns blanket the landscape and form a path to the sea (a UNESCO World Heritage site). Wind up at one of Ireland's most historic and cultural spots, the walled city of **Derry-Londonderry**. Inside its 17th-century walls is a warren of pubs, eateries, shops, theatres, and attractions. Walk the Wall's one-mile circuit to best experience the old city.



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LITERARY TRAVELS

BOOKED IN PORTO

Marvels and magic at Portugal's top indie bookstore



Co-owner José Manuel Lello (at far left, below) lets us peek behind the stacks at Livraria Lello, in Porto, Portugal, one of the world's most beautiful bookstores.

WHAT'S THE BACKSTORY? In 1906, my great-grandfather, José Lello, and his younger brother, António, created Livraria Lello as we know it today. It's located right in the heart of the labyrinthine streets of the old town, where you'll find some of the city's most important historic attractions. The store was designed by Xavier Esteves; its opening was a major event not only in Portugal but throughout Europe.

THAT CENTRAL RED STAIRCASE IS QUITE SPECTACULAR. The staircase is an engineering masterpiece and the most photographed element of the bookstore. All the ornaments around

the staircase are made of plaster, employing the trompe l'oeil technique to imitate wood. Only the handrails are made of actual wood, brought from Brazil for its high quality. J.K. Rowling, when she lived in Porto, used to visit quite often, and it's said the staircase was one of the sources of inspiration for the *Harry Potter* saga. Remember the moving stairs at Hogwarts?

WHAT ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BOOKS ON PORTUGAL DO YOU RECOMMEND?

Grape Harvest, by Miguel Torga, is a novel about the hard work of grape pickers but set amid the lovely landscapes of the Douro Valley during the 1930s and '40s. In *Journey to Portugal*, José Saramago offers a non-touristy depiction of Portugal. *Lisbon, What the Tourist Should See* was written by Fernando Pessoa, one of our greatest poets/writers.

PEDRO GUIMARÃES (BOTH PHOTOS)

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EXPLORER

Shark Savior

Diving deep with explorer Jessica Cramp in the Cook Islands

Even though she's never watched Shark Week, marine conservationist Jessica Cramp cares a lot about the enigmatic, misunderstood predators. Based in the Cook Islands, this National Geographic explorer helped create one of the world's largest shark sanctuaries, fights illegal fishing, and tries to turn the tide of sharks' *Jaws*-influenced reputation.

SHARKS GET A BAD RAP. WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT SAVING THEM? I don't want to suggest that all species are harmless, because they aren't, but that doesn't mean they should be wiped out, either. Sharks' reproductive characteristics—late to mature, slow-growing, few

offspring—make them especially vulnerable to exploitation and overfishing. The problem is that much of the public thinks “good riddance” if shark numbers decrease. What people don't understand is why we need to be very cautious of the balance of our oceans.

WHAT WOULD SURPRISE PEOPLE MOST ABOUT SHARKS? If you jump in the water with them under normal circumstances, meaning no fish in your wet suit, you aren't necessarily going to be attacked. In the Galápagos, I jumped off a boat into a group of 10 large silky sharks. They swam in slow, curious circles around me and then, uninterested, continued what

they were doing before I got in. I wanted more interaction, but they were bored with me.

HOW CAN SOMEONE AID IN SHARK CONSERVATION? If you like to eat fish, you can start by learning about whether or not that fish is threatened in the wild. Then you should inquire how your fish gets caught. What method of fishing was used—longliner, trawler, pole and line, a purse seine? What are the side effects of those methods? Does the restaurant make a point to buy sustainable fish? Are your fish-and-chips actually shark meat? It's a good start to understanding the challenge. —HANNAH SHEINBERG



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Locals soak in the lengthy outdoor hot tub at Nauthólsvík Geothermal Beach, Reykjavík.

MY CITY

Tale of Two Reykjavíks

BY HALLGRÍMUR HELGASON

We can talk about two Reykjavíks. The wonderful one and the awful one, the one we love and the one we love less.

The tourists come to Iceland for the first one, but sometimes you see them stuck in the latter: stranded on a traffic island, in their tip-top winter gear, with only their noses poking out, trying hard to eye Google maps on their smartphones through the raging blizzard, on their way to see the northern lights. But you can also spot, inside their heads, the bright image of a sunny midnight hour on the hotel roof, with a view out on the spectacular harbor and surroundings, the ocean a shiny mirror reflecting the sunset, while the downtown

area is filled with bearded hipsters in suspenders making out with elfin beauties to the beat of the latest post-Björk band.

We used to be an isolated village with an attitude, but now we've become the must-do western Europe stopover. The northern lights have become a thriving business. Every morning thousands of foreigners come rushing through the airport arrival gates, eager to see the celestial fireworks. Only half of them will get lucky. Either they land in the good Reykjavík or the bad one.

The bars of Reykjavík constantly fill up with international crowds, in town for the Secret Solstice music festival or Airwaves or RIFF (Reykjavík International Film Festival),

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and create memories
for tomorrow. It's
both old and youthful,
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you could want in a
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Whether you embark on a Nile River cruise, visit the great pyramids, immerse yourself in the cosmopolitan city of Cairo, or relax at one of the Red Sea resorts, you head off on more than just the trip of a lifetime.

Egypt is a journey deep into human civilization. The best part of all is the hospitality of the Egyptian people, greeting and guiding you along the way.

THIS IS HISTORY

Just south of the capital city of Cairo, you'll find the **Great Pyramids of Giza**. Take a guided horseback ride around the pyramids and past the mysterious **Sphinx**, and feel the colossal pride of the pharaohs of nearly 5,000 years ago. A visit to Giza brings you face to face with history on the grandest scale.

After dark, you can witness a spectacular multi-language sound and light show, illuminating the pyramids and other iconic structures. And you'll enjoy **Giza's** many lively culinary and entertainment options.

THIS IS LOVE

Travel the upper Nile on the famous **Luxor-to-Aswan route**, and immerse yourself in fascinating Egyptian lore. A pharaoh's gift to his beloved queen, one of the two massive rock-cut temples at **Abu Simbel** near Aswan was built by Ramses II to honor Nefertari. It's the only Nile temple constructed in the name of love. And it has endured more than 3,000 years.

Another queen holds sway downriver in Luxor. There you'll fall for a woman who outshone men more than four millennia ago. Queen Hatshepsut dressed like a king, ruled like a king, and was buried in the **Valley of the Kings**. A stirring monument recognizes an empowered woman ahead of her time.

Take a romantic balloon ride over **Luxor** and see the **Nile Valley** in a way the pharaohs could only imagine. Or sail a lateen-rigged felucca to a Nile River island and visit the **Philae Temple**. Let yourself be enticed by the smells and sounds of the bazaars and riverside restaurants of **Aswan**. Or simply cool off with a fresh mango or orange juice from a street vendor or juice bar.

THIS IS PARADISE

Warm sun shines on the resort of **Sharm el-Sheik** 364 days a year. If this is winter, who wouldn't take it? Dive and snorkel over the reefs and wrecks at **Ras Mohammad**, Egypt's oldest marine nature park. This is paradise Egyptian-style, complete with long beaches, clear waters, and swaying palms.

Another Red Sea Riviera town, **Hurghada** serves up an intoxicating blend of water sports and nightlife. Swim with dolphins during the day, or go for the adrenaline rush of kite surfing. In the old town you'll find traditional Egyptian coffee shops and colorful souks. At night treat yourself to a chic restaurant, followed by a night on the town with concerts, belly dancing, or meeting friendly locals over cocktails.

the biennial Reykjavík Literature Festival, or Design March in spring. The most popular is New Year's Eve, when locals put on one of the biggest displays of fireworks on Earth. For over an hour the city becomes the war zone it has never been.

Best time to visit, though, is summer. This is the time of magical Reykjavík, when the city doesn't sleep, when it's party time for trees, birds, and people, when the sun hides only for an hour and comes up again in a new spot. You never know where you'll see it the next time, and this is the core of Reykjavík's soul: You never know what's next. You never know what kind of city awaits you in the morning. It might have been spring last night, but today it's winter. ("Autumn is early this year," is a favorite survival joke in May and June.) And this rule of nature affects other things. Suddenly

your bank has become a hotel, the supermarket a vinyl store. The parking garage has been turned into a hospital overnight, the slow traffic you're honking at is actually a funeral procession, and by the way, Patti Smith is singing in the garden, while that young guy taking a selfie at the gas station is actually Justin Bieber.

Loving Reykjavík is easy. It's very user-friendly, with no six-laned traffic or sweaty crowds at subway stations (there is no metro). Every commute is 10 minutes max. And even though the city has become more international, it still preserves that village feel. You're required to say "Hi!" at least five times as you head for brunch at fresh new Bergsson Mathús, next to the parliament, or walk over to the Eymundsson bookstore for your after-lunch coffee and a browse through all the latest releases (the most

well known exports of Iceland seem to be fish and novels). For the more ambitious, a stroll through the stacks of old books at Bókin bookstore is a must. Then head for one of the many geothermally heated outdoor swimming pools and "hot pots," the true pride of Reykjavík. (Besides the Hungarians and Japanese, Icelanders are the only people on Earth who go to the pool without taking a swim.)

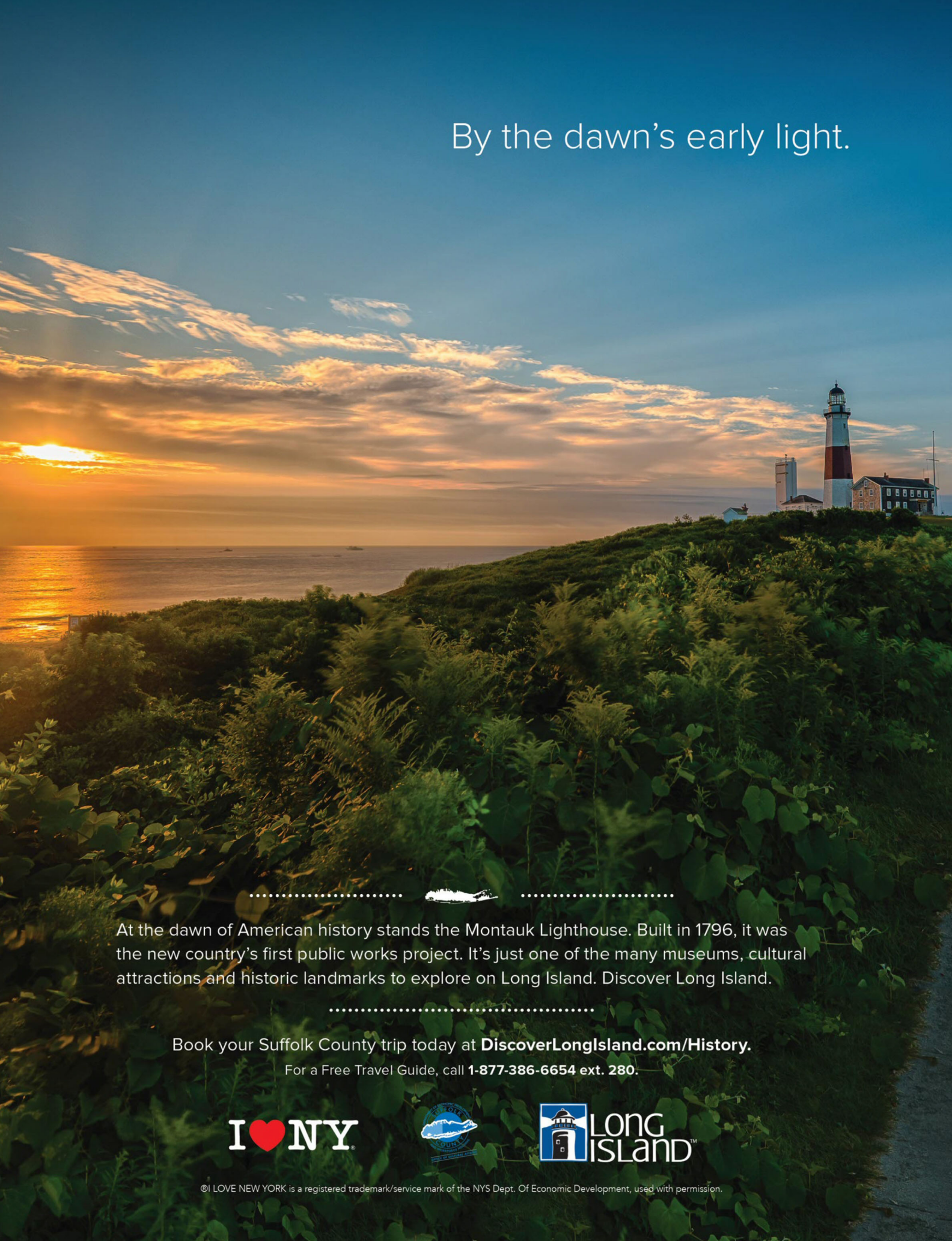
Nighttime takes you for a ride down Sæbraut, our Sunset Boulevard, where you can inhale all the surrounding islands and mountains and get a glimpse of Höfði House, an old wooden charmer among all the pre-crash banks and glass-clad buildings on Borgartún Street (now nicknamed "Boulevard of Broken Dreams"). From there on to Harpa, our new and glassy concert hall, or to an opening at the übercool



On gray days, buildings in the heart of Reykjavík bring the rainbow; Grillmarkaðurinn's menu features local products such as trout and skyr.

COCOY AND POPE NABUA (RAINBOW BUILDING), SLAWEK KOZDRAS (RESTAURANT)

By the dawn's early light.



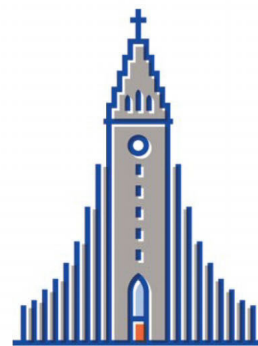
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Where the Locals Go

You can see my city best from the **244-foot tower of the Hallgrímskirkja church**.

Locals know to skip the **Blue Lagoon** and check out the **swimming pools** instead.

12 Tónar music store is the place to buy local souvenirs.

My city's best museum is the **National Museum of Iceland** because **you never know what awaits you**.

July is the best time to visit my city because the **light is on 24 hours a day**.

The dish that represents my city best is a **hot dog "with everything"** at **Bæjarins Beztu**, and the **Kaffitár latte** is my city's signature drink. Sample it at **Kaffitár café**.



To find out what's going on at night and on the weekends, read the **Reykjavík Grapevine**.

Notable people who have called my city home include the **writer Halldór Laxness**.

My city is known for **being cool** but it's really **warm**.

—Hallgrímur Helgason

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Talents as varied as pianist **Víkingur Ólafsson** and comic **Russell Brand** perform at Harpa concert hall.

i8 Gallery. The most acclaimed international indie films can be enjoyed at wonderful **Bíó Paradís**. Happy hour is happiest at lively **Snaps** or **Kaldi Bar**, named after the best local beer.

Dinner is perfect at **Fiskmarkaðurinn**, owned by genius chef **Hrefna Sætran**, or the recently opened **Matur og Drykkur**, where another genius, **Gísli Matthías Auðunsson**, is experimenting with old-school Icelandic cuisine. For nightlife, head for **Kaffibarinn** if you think you're young, or **Ölstofan** if you know your age.

The day after, you might awake to the less lovely Reykjavík. It rains on your nose, and the radio is talking about the resignation of the prime minister or yet another Ponzi scheme dreamed up by our infamous greed-masters, and you ask yourself if this is really your favorite town.

And after another moment you have to answer, "I guess so," because Reykjavík is unlike any other city. There is no other capital this far from it all, yet this close to the action. It has the power of the outpost, the lure of the exotic, the charm of the old, and the edge of the new. If New York is an old (Big) Apple computer, then Reykjavík is an Oculus Rift.

Plus it's the only city I know of that shuts down because of both a blizzard and the best day of summer.

HALLGRÍMUR HELGASON is the author of 101 Reykjavík and The Hitman's Guide to Housecleaning. His latest novel, The Woman at 1000°, will soon be available in English. Follow him: [@HalgrimHelgason](https://twitter.com/HalgrimHelgason)



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THREE TASTE TRAILS IN THE FOODIE-EST PLACE ON EARTH

BY ANDREW NELSON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

LEAH NASH AND CHRISTOPHER ONSTOTT

San Diego



A group of five people are seated around a wooden outdoor table, engaged in conversation and holding glasses of wine. They are positioned under a trellis structure covered with green vines and warm-toned string lights. The scene is set in a garden-like environment with trees and foliage in the background. The word "Sonoma" is written in a large, white, cursive script across the middle of the image.

Sonoma

"Life is about the dinner table."

Ridgely Evers says this as he and I survey DaVero Farms & Winery, 67 acres of olive groves, orchards, and vineyards in California's Sonoma County that Evers owns with his wife, Colleen McGlynn. "And you won't sit at a table like this," he declares, "anywhere else in America." Evers clearly is partial to this land of tawny hills and lofty redwoods bordering the more fame-conscious Napa County, yet his words ring true.

Sit at a table in Napa, and chances are it'll be set with fancy china and polished silver, in the great hall of a mansion. In Sonoma, your dinner may well be served under the stars on a simple wood plank set with mismatched cutlery and candles stuck in old wine bottles. Goats may bleat in the background and chickens may cluck underfoot, but the meal will be magnificent.

Dusty and down-to-earth, Sonoma reaps its star power from its affable authenticity. Here, an hour north of San Francisco, soil is valued more than silicon. The seduction is subtle, lingering in the flavors of home-cured pork *salumi*, the intense aroma of a goat brie, the blackberry bouquet of an Alexander Valley Pinot Noir.

Napa can have its super chefs; in Sonoma, celebrity comes from being one of the cheesemongers, olive pickers, pig farmers, and grape growers who have turned this county's 1,768 square miles into what may be America's best test kitchen.

A hundred years ago, Sonoma resident and *The Call of the Wild* author Jack London gazed out at the landscape around his ranch and wrote, "I am all sun and air and sparkle." Sonoma will have the same effect on you on the taste trails that follow.

A platter of plenty
at Valette restaurant,
in Healdsburg.
Opening pages: Dining
takes an outdoor turn
in Sonoma County,
here at DaVero.
Farms & Winery.





OLIVE OIL TRAIL

ABOUT 80 MILES
Roughly an hour and 45 minutes driving time

The history of Sonoma's gnarled olive trees intertwines with that of the Golden State. Spanish missionaries brought the first olive cuttings to California in the 1700s, planting them on the grounds of the 21 Franciscan missions that they established along the Camino Real, a route that extended from San Diego to the town of Sonoma. Fast-forward to the 1990s, and the growing sophistication of American palates clamors for this nutritional condiment. Local output of olive oil expands. California now presses 99 percent of the nation's olive oil, with Sonoma County—focused on distilling the most refined grades of extra-virgin oil—one of the state's biggest producers.

This renaissance is due in part to Ridgely Evers, who journeyed to Tuscany to find the perfect olive trees to plant on his Da Vero land. Today Evers and his wife, Colleen McGlynn, cultivate more than 5,000 trees on their spread in the Dry Creek Valley. Add those to the 18,000 Tuscan olive trees the Kendall-Jackson wineries have planted, mostly in the Alexander and Bennett Valleys, and Sonoma is a promising new branch for a fruit with an ancient lineage—as attested here by our olive trail.

1

Begin at **MISSION SAN FRANCISCO SOLANO**, in the town of Sonoma; highlights include a small museum that displays an olive millstone. Northernmost of California's Franciscan religious centers and the only one built during Mexican rule, this mission sits just off Sonoma's town plaza. Don't miss the series of watercolors painted by the early 20th-century artist Chris Jorgensen.

2

Sonoma's oils come in many flavors, lime to jalapeño. Stop by the Olive Press, on the grounds of the **JACUZZI FAMILY VINEYARDS**, south of downtown Sonoma, to tour the plant where olives are crushed and their oil infused with flavors. "It takes a thousand pounds of grapes to make 60 gallons of wine," says Vicki Zancanella, a biologist on staff, "and the same number of olives for 15 gallons of oil."

3

Roll an hour north to Healdsburg for lunch at **BARNDIVA**, an airy locale with a courtyard shaded by mulberry trees. The pea-gravel ground cover evokes a Parisian park. Barndiva serves such fresh-on-the-fork specialties as a kale Caesar salad accompanied by olive crostini and pecorino dressing.

5

Bed down at the **FARMHOUSE INN**, a luxurious retreat in the rolling Russian River Valley countryside. This 25-room resort suggests a dairy theme with its palette of milk tones and the cheese-accented dishes the restaurant prepares, curated by Michelin-star chef Steve Litke. Other amenities: a spa (go for the "body melt"), a resident cat, and s'mores ready for toasting on the poolside fire pit.

4

You'll find a tasting room with a view at **TRATTORE FARMS**, 10 miles northwest of Healdsburg: The patio offers an expansive vista of the Dry Creek Valley. Trattore specializes both in wines (try its Zinfandel) and olive oils, for which it uses two giant granite wheels to crush the olives into a mash that is then pressed and refined into oil you can sample.

Olive oil from Jacuzzi Family Vineyards



Olive oil from Trattore Farms



Mission San Francisco Solano

114 E. Spain St., Sonoma

24724 Arnold Dr., Sonoma



Menu items at Barndiva (top) include Sonoma wines and goat cheese croquettes. DaVero Farms “olive whisperer” Juan Valladares (above) harvests with care.



Guitarist Jordan Colby performs in Healdsburg's town square (top). Elizabeth Pacheco cuddles a kid (above) at her family's Achadinha Cheese Company farm.

CHEESE TRAIL

ABOUT
70 MILES

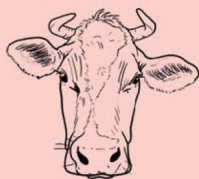
Roughly an hour
and 40 minutes
driving time

380
Bohemian
Hwy.,
Freestone

140
Bohemian
Hwy.,
Freestone



Freestone Artisan
Cheese Store



750 Chileno
Valley Rd.,
Petaluma

3

3

Become a “curd nerd” by enrolling in a cheese class (offered a few times a year) at the **ACHADINHA CHEESE COMPANY**, run by Donna and Jim Pacheco on their 290-acre Petaluma dairy farm, 25 miles southeast of Freestone. Lessons are hands-on, as pupils plunge elbow deep into fresh curds and whey. Included: a boxed lunch and wine.

5007
Fulton Rd.,
Fulton

4



Kendall-
Jackson Wine
Estate and
Gardens



Wild Flour
Bread Bakery



5

10400
Sonoma
Hwy.,
Kenwood

2

Walk five minutes east on the two-lane Bohemian Highway to the **WILD FLOUR BREAD BAKERY**, for a loaf or two of brick-oven sourdough; the crusty breads will come in handy for the cheese you just bought. If you can, get there early enough to also score a loaf of Wild Flour's Gravenstein apple bread, made with an apple variety native to Denmark that now flourishes in the Sonoma area.

1

You'll find plenty of Sonoma cheeses, from dairies with such offbeat names as Bleating Heart and Pugs Leap, on the chalkboard at Omar Mueller's homey **FREESTONE ARTISAN CHEESE STORE**, an ideal place to swap stories with—and get cheese intel from—the genial cheesemonger and his neighbors in the cozy village of Freestone.

4

Before the sun sets, barrel north some 30 miles to the **KENDALL-JACKSON WINE ESTATE AND GARDENS** for elegant wine and cheese pairings. Spice up slices of Boho Belle with a Grand Reserve Chardonnay or balance a Jackson Estate Trace Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon with bites of Two Rock Valley Brie.

5

When you're ready to call it a night, drive 20 miles southeast to the **KENWOOD INN AND SPA**, a villa-style lodge that blends a Mediterranean feel (Italian furnishings and linens) with a north California sensibility. Among the frills: sunning terraces, a pool, and a guests-only restaurant serving local olives and Laura Chenel cheese.

Western Sonoma County traditionally has supported many family dairies and creameries, thanks to a temperate climate that nurtures plenty of sweet clover for livestock to graze on. More recently, a number of farmers have diversified by crafting all manner of artisan cheeses, buttery to sharp to crumbly. “It’s a multigenerational obsession, with families working together to sustain the old business and the land,” says Sheana Davis, a noted cheesemaker in the town of Sonoma who consults for other *fromage* start-ups. Today these family enterprises are found throughout the county, turning milk into wheels of cheddars and blues.

Their secret begins with the relatively small size of their farms; most support 200 to 250 animals. “A car is only as good as its engine—an idea we apply to our goats, sheep, and cows,” says Lisa Gottreich, cheesemaker and owner of Sebastopol’s Bohemian Creamery. “We have happy animals producing happy milk, which makes great cheese.” Indeed. President Obama and the first lady nibbled on Gottreich’s Boho Belle cheese while in San Francisco. This Cheese Trail proposes other places that will please your palate.



"I am all
sun and
air and
sparkle:"

Green hills meet blue
waters in Sonoma
Coast State Park,
skirted by Highway 1.



A PERFECT PLACE FOR A PICNIC

Guerneville

Hit the Big Bottom Market for ready-to-go bag lunches and meander to nearby Austin Creek State Recreation Area, to lunch among rolling, tree-covered hills.

Bartholomew Park

Tucked between Petaluma and Napa, this private park (part of a winery by the same name) offers hiking trails with views of meadows, shaded woods, and, on clear days, San Francisco Bay.

Dry Creek Valley

Snap up picnic eats—cheeses, salamis—at the tasting room of the Truett Hurst Winery, then head over to its seating area by Dry Creek to eat and sip the winery's Petite Sirah as fish swim by.

1

The smoker starts early and puffs all day long at the **SCHELLVILLE GRILL**, three miles south of Sonoma. Get here for breakfast and your eggs come with homemade smoked paprika sausage. If you're a late riser, sally in for a lunch of pork ribs or the cooked-10-hours barbecue pork and grilled cheese.

2

Motor north to Santa Rosa to snag some sausage, bacon, and jerky at the roadside **SONOMA COUNTY MEAT CO. SHOP**, where you also can try your hand at carving. When he's not grinding grass-fed local beef into hamburger meat, co-owner and head butcher Rian Rinn teaches classes in sausagemaking and bacon curing.

3

A 15-minute drive west from Santa Rosa brings you to Sebastopol, where you can fortify yourself with a BLT at **ZAZU**. Located in the Barlow, a cluster of food- and arts-centric warehouses, this restaurant and bar is sleek but with the friendly vibe of a fish fry. Try the "rodeo jax"—bacon and caramel popcorn—or the house version of *chicharrones*. Then marvel at the hog-wild items for purchase, such as light-up pig pens and lard lipstick.

4

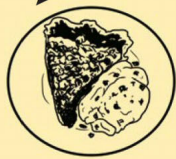
Top off lunch with berry pie crowned by a scoop of Nimble & Finn's bacon-accented maple bourbon brittle ice cream at **CHILE PIES BAKING CO.**, in Guerneville, just north of Sebastopol. Both Chile Pies and Nimble & Finn's are housed in the historic Guerneville Bank Club building. Afterward, amble down Main Street to find out what's on at the River Theater, a performance hall popular for its lineup of music acts.

5

Hit the hay in another piece of Guerneville history, the **DAWN RANCH**, built in 1905 on the banks of the Russian River. Fifty-three cabins and cottages dot the property's 15 acres, which also support an apple orchard and kitchen garden. If you find you haven't yet had your fill of pork, the ranch's restaurant, Agriculture Public House, will be happy to cook you up a Berkshire pork chop or pulled-pork ravioli.



16290 Main St., Guerneville
16467 Hwy. 16, Guerneville



Pie with ice cream at Chile Pies Baking Co.

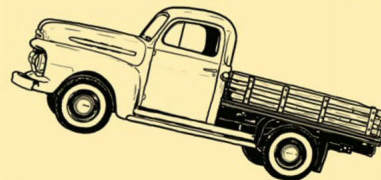
6770 McKinley St., Sebastopol

"Rodeo Jax" (bacon and caramel popcorn) at Zazu

35 Sebastopol Ave., Santa Rosa



Apples from the orchard at Dawn Ranch



22900 Broadway, Sonoma

PORK TRAIL

ABOUT 50 MILES
Roughly an hour and 15 minutes driving time

If Sonoma sizzles, chances are it's the bacon in the skillet. The county is a center for such heritage pig breeds as the Tuscan Cinta Senese and the Mangalitsa, a Hungarian hog with rich meat marbled with fat. Whatever the heirloom breed, these animals lead what Front Porch Farm, a practitioner of sustainable animal husbandry in the Russian River Valley, calls a "fully expressed life." Says Sonoma farmer/butcher John Stewart, who with his wife, Duskie Estes, owns the Black Pig Meat Co.: "Our pigs have only one bad day." They permit their animals to forage in open pastures right up to the time they become menu items at Zazu, Stewart and Estes' convivial Sebastopol restaurant. "There's a family behind every business here," Estes says. "I call it 'Sonoma soul.'"

Schellville Grill



Editor at large ANDREW NELSON (@andrewnelson) has traveled the U.S. in search of great tastes. Photographers LEAH NASH (@leahnashphoto) and CHRISTOPHER ONSTOTT (@christopheronstott) contribute to numerous publications.



Free-roaming Front Porch Farm pigs (top) forage for acorns. Dusk descends on Jordan Vineyard (above), producer of wines and a tasty extra-virgin olive oil.



Manila
with
zest

SOUR FINDS ITS BIGGEST FANS IN THE PHILIPPINES

BY WILMA B. CONSUL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG KAHN



Sour tends to be an underrated flavor— except in the Philippines.

At this very moment, a good number of the 12 million people in Metro Manila are craving sour. Manileños bite into a tart, crisp slice of green mango dabbed with fermented shrimp paste for an afternoon snack. They slurp a hearty bowl of tamarind soup at a Sunday after-church lunch. They crunch fried fish dipped in chili-spiked palm vinegar at a cafeteria-style *turo-turo*, where customers simply point (*turo*) at their dish of choice.

Sour appears on menus everywhere in the Philippines. Each dish has a distinct taste and degree of tanginess based on the region and the season. In Manila, sour can be found both at a design-centric restaurant in the financial district of Makati and at a Baclaran *carinderia*, a food stall where jeepney and pedicab drivers sit on benches for a meal and a break from the city's paralyzing traffic.

When nature handed this Southeast Asian country lemons—and a tropical bounty of other acidic fruits—the Filipinos made lemonade. And seviche. And sour fried chicken.

That last dish appears on the menu at Kafé Batwan, in Makati. Chef JP Anglo pays homage to his roots on Negros, the fourth largest of the Philippines' 7,107 islands, by featuring the native *batwan*, a hard fruit smaller than a lime. Anglo marinates the chicken in batwan juice, coconut vinegar, and lemongrass salt, then fries it crisp for a surprisingly delicious twist. The stairs leading up to a second-floor dining room showcase bottles of spicy housemade vinegar and Don Papa, a small-batch rum named after the shaman and revolutionary who in 1896 freed from the Spaniards the island of Negros, where this sugarcane product is distilled.

"Sourness is the main flavor that distinguishes us from other Asian cuisines," says Amy Besa, cookbook author and

co-owner of Purple Yam in Manila's buzzing retail district of Malate. Located in Besa's ancestral home, the restaurant displays original artworks by acclaimed Filipino modernist Botong Francisco, Besa's godfather.

Besa and her husband, chef Romy Dorotan, alternate between Manila and Brooklyn, where the original Purple Yam has drawn fans of the couple's fresh and elegantly updated Filipino dishes since 2009 (and before that at their now shuttered SoHo restaurant, Cendrillon).

"The holy trinity of native Filipino foods," says Besa, is *adobo*, *sinigang*, and *kinilaw* (a cured seafood dish similar to seviche). "All three dishes are cooked and eaten by all classes of society from the very rich to the very poor," she says. Dorotan's recipe for chicken *adobo*—meat braised in rice vinegar, garlic, pepper, and coconut milk—is possibly the most published and shared of all Filipino *adobos*.

Many Filipinos believe that imbibing a steaming sour soup, such as *sinigang*, helps cool the body—and whet the appetite.

Chefs Isaiah Ortega and Korinne Lirio-Ortega believe in the power of sour soup so much that they opened *Sinigang* restaurant in BF Homes Parañaque, a well-off Manila neighborhood that has seen numerous restaurants open in the past year.

Prior to the restaurant's launch, Ortega read up on all things *sinigang* and traveled the provinces. He says he found "more than 20 different souring agents used for *sinigang*," including pineapple, herbs, tree bark, and others he'd never heard of such as *libas* (hog plum), *bignay* (Chinese laurel), and *katmon* (elephant apple). The Ortegas had the sour fruits shipped to Manila in sacks.

Patrick Roa's food awakening happened during his search for the best seviche. "I can make you 50 kinds of seviche, if you want," Roa says. He and his wife, Pia Temporal Roa, opened Patricio's Cevicheria in Fort Bonifacio to share his findings. The Roas also serve Hawaiian *poke* and regional Filipino *kinilaw*. Their superstar dish: *kinilaw de Oro*, fresh tuna cured in coconut vinegar with fruits and roots indigenous to the region around Cagayan de Oro, where Patrick grew up.

Whether you're dining at Harbour Square with a view of Manila Bay or meeting for lunch in the posh Rockwell Center area of Makati, it's perfectly natural to ask the servers for some fish sauce (*patis*) to accompany your meal. This will come on a small plate with a sweet-sour calamansi and one little red hot pepper slit in the middle to let you temper the heat.

"The ritual of *sawsawan* (dipping sauce) is an important part of Filipino meals," says Pia Lim-Castillo, who teaches cooking at her home kitchen in Forbes Park, Makati. "By adjusting the sauce, the eater partakes in the cooking."

D.C.-based WILMA B. CONSUL (@citizencookdc) is a journalist, artist, and chef who cooks with *patis*. Fellow Washingtonian GREG KAHN (@gregkahn) has been trying to re-create Manila dishes. He says, "I never realized how much I love sour food!"

Manila's Quiapo Market sells everything from produce and street food to religious items and pets. Opening pages: Co-workers morph into rock stars at I'm a Singer, one of the city's many popular karaoke bars.





WHAT MEALTIME IN MANILA LOOKS LIKE

Clockwise from top left: a Makati streetside food cart selling grilled pork and chicken skewers until late; *lechon* (roasted suckling pig), a favorite special-occasion dish in the Philippines, being prepared at Elarz Lechon; food served on banana leaves in traditional Filipino style at Gerry's Jeepney in Quezon City; along Felipe Street in Makati, known for its late-night food and drinks; pork with various dipping sauces at a private catered party in the wealthy neighborhood of Forbes Park; a sunset dinner cruise around Manila Bay.





BEST PLACES TO TRY FILIPINO FOOD IN THE U.S.

Purple Yam BROOKLYN

Amy Besa and Romy Dorotan set the bar for U.S. Filipino restaurants. Order the signature chicken adobo. purpleyamnyc.com

Patio Filipino SAN BRUNO, CA.

This Bay Area favorite nods to Spain's influence with dishes like paella and callos a la Madrileña (tripe stew). patiofilipino.com

Belly & Snout LOS ANGELES

Warren Almeda presents American fast-food staples with Filipino flair, such as longanisa (sausage) grilled cheese. bellyandsnout.com

Bad Saint WASHINGTON, D.C.

Diners endure the no-reservation policy to feast on *dinuguan* (pork blood stew) and sautéed bitter melon and eggs. badsaintdc.com

Isla Pilipina CHICAGO

It's OK to order extra at this Lincoln Square budget storefront eatery famous for its crispy *pata* (deep-fried pork knuckle). islapilipina.com



ROCHER
Cœur fondant de praliné enrobé de chocolat et roulé dans des éclats d'amandes concassées

CŒUR NOIR
Praliné nature enrobé de chocolat noir

COCO MALIBU
Ganache de chocolat blanc, noir de coco et Malibu

CARAMEL BEURRE SALE
Caramel vanille au beurre salé avec double enrobage chocolat noir puis chocolat au lait

MENDIANTS
Pâlets de chocolat recouverts de fruits secs et fruits confits au chocolat au lait ou au chocolat noir

FRAMBOISIER
Ganache à la crème de framboises enrobée de chocolat noir

PUR GRENADE
Ganache à la crème de grenade enrobée de chocolat noir



La Vie Chocho

Cocoa hits all the sweet notes in the Basque town of Bayonne, France's spirited capital of chocolate.

BY CEIL MILLER BOUCHET
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN FINKE

The Sweet Scent of Chocolate floats on the very breeze in Bayonne.



This may surprise visitors who find their way to this otherwise modest Basque town in southwestern France. It shouldn't. Bayonne played a pivotal role in the spread of the cocoa confection through Europe, thanks to its proximity to Spain, where cacao beans were first brought by Spanish colonists upon their return from South America.

Bayonne intrigued me on my first visit, one long-ago August afternoon. I arrived during the Assumption Day festival, when flag-lined streets were jammed with rowdy locals sporting red Basque-pride neckerchiefs. Absorbed by their celebrations, nobody returned my smile. I felt like an interloper. But behind Bayonne's boisterousness I sensed a strong regional spirit, a fierce fidelity to the town's traditions. Key among which, I'd learn, is the making of chocolate.

So when I heard rumors of a nascent chocolate revival in this port city at the foot of the Pyrenees, I made plans to return. I knew my first stop: Chocolat Cazenave, a small shop and *salon de thé* tucked under stonework arcades, where chocolate has been made since 1854 and where I have just had an epiphany.

On my table sits a porcelain teacup filled with a thick drinking chocolate redolent of cinnamon and vanilla and coiffed with a dome of dense foam. "This is how chocolate was originally consumed in France," owner Marie-Claudine Maudet tells me, "by melting the bar into milk and frothing it." What I taste is an alchemy of the highest order.

"Bayonne's chocolate reputation began in the 17th century, when Jews fleeing the Spanish Inquisition flocked here from Spain and Portugal," says Andy Fisher, a transplanted New Zealander who has become the city's resident chocolate guide and is escorting me on a half-day tasting tour of Old Bayonne. "Spanish colonists 'discovered' drinking chocolate in Mexico," Fisher explains as we head to Rue Port Neuf, the pedestrian "chocolate street" where many of the town's oldest chocolate makers have their shops. "Some colonists brought cacao beans back to Spain, but the bitter cocoa powder didn't immediately please palates."

It was the addition of sweet cane sugar and cinnamon that would vault chocolate into a special category. "Soon Bayonne became France's chocolate-producing capital, thanks to Jewish savoir faire," Fisher adds. "It stayed that way until the 1800s." He steers me toward the bright orange awning of Maison Pariès, the fashionable "Chanel" of local chocolate houses. Its gleaming array of chocolates looks too pretty to eat but I succumb, for the sake of history, when I learn that the chic maison was founded in 1895 and is still owned by the original

Foam tops a cup of rich *chocolat chaud*, or hot chocolate, at Cazenave, among the chocolate shops that line Bayonne's Rue Port Neuf (opposite). Opening pages: Atelier du Chocolat.



BAYONNE'S HOT SPOTS FOR RICH CHOCOLAT CHAUD

Chocolat Cazenave

This chocolatier founded in 1854 is known for its *chocolat mousseux*, or frothy chocolate, served in Limoges teacups.

Chocolat Pascal

Colorfully decorated Chocolat Pascal transforms a cup of hot chocolate into an experience. Also tempting: chocolate truffles and pralines.

Lionel Raux

Chocolate comes in many forms in this *pâtisserie*, from creamy *chocolat chaud* to macarons, pastries, and signature Basque gâteaux.

Le Belzunce

Squeezed into a small storefront, cozy Belzunce dazzles with its *chocolat viennois*—hot chocolate topped with whipped cream.

This page: Cocoa paste mixes with sugar, vanilla, and other ingredients at the chocolatier Cazenave. Opposite page, clockwise: Chocolate glaze pours from a pitcher to coat a cake at Maison Pariès. *Bonbon banane* confections fill a tray at L'Atelier du Chocolat. Master chocolatier Denis Ortali dips balls of ganache into liquid chocolate at Daranatz. Pirouette pastries receive final touches at Maison Pariès.



An alchemy



of the highest order



Take-home treat: A slice of decadent goodness from Maison Pariès.

family. My choices include chewy Kanougas caramels—Pariès’ “*ancienne spécialité*”—and chocolates shaped like the nearby Rhune mountain.

Next we hit a more recent purveyor of Bayonne chocolate, Puyodebat, to admire its collection of antique hot chocolate pots, complete with wooden frothers. The French invented this elegant service, Fisher notes, when hot chocolate was all the rage at Versailles. I leave with a small bag of praline *craquinettes*, the chocolate-hazelnut house specialty.

By the time we reach L’Atelier du Chocolat, I’m beginning to feel a bit overwrought from the caffeine and sugar. Still, I steel myself as shop manager Sylvie Bernac spreads molten chocolate on a tray in the store’s demonstration workshop.

“Would you like to taste our specialty, made with our local hot pepper powder?” she asks me, looking up from her work. Everything I love about Basque country now fuses in the complex flavor of the dark sliver she proffers. Rustic tannins melt into subtle sweetness tinged with the piquancy of piment d’Espelette.

I express my amazement at the sublime pairing. “You know,” she says, “when I am a bit down, I take a piece and up I go!” I can relate to that.

As we head back out, Fisher tells me that L’Atelier du Chocolat is just one part of a Bayonne chocolate dynasty that includes a popular diversion: a “chocolate discovery

museum,” in their workshop on the outskirts of town, with exhibits on the history of chocolate, chocolate-making tools, and chocolate’s central place in the regional culture. In other words, chocolate heaven.

FROM THE RIVERFRONT in Bayonne’s old town, streets sweep up to the Cathedral of Saint Mary, looming over the confluence of the Nive and Adour Rivers. If a night could be described as medieval, I’m experiencing it. A few people scurry home across cobblestones slick with rain as the metal curtains of cafés come creaking down. A strong wind rips through the *rues*. For a traveler, hunger and thirst sometimes are indistinguishable, in the way that biting cold can feel like fire. Spotting the light of a *creperie*, A La Bolée, spilling onto the cathedral’s flank, I pause.

“Of course we are still serving. Come on in!” the Amélie-like waitress says. Since I’m alone, and she is chatty, I ask Lucie where she goes for her chocolate. Maison Pariès, she says, for boxed chocolate as gifts—“the wrapping is so pretty, it’s like buying jewelry!”—and Chocolat Pascal, “because, you know, I’m young and I love music, and Pascal, the owner, is also a jazz musician. On Saturday mornings, he has record exchanges at his shop’s café.” He also serves chocolate in many permutations, from pralines to ganaches, truffles, and hot chocolate in what he calls “*une ambiance jazzy*.”

The ambiance is more on the stylish side in Pâtisserie Lionel Raux, a “pastry shop, chocolate maker, teahouse,” according to its signage on an elegant corner building. By now I know that “teahouse” in Bayonne means one thing, hot chocolate, so I am prepared. Bypassing the selection of pastries and bonbons, I head upstairs to the light-flooded tearoom overlooking the city’s ancient market square and order the *chocolat chaud*. As I stir the scoop of creamy homemade ganache into a tall glass of steaming milk—yet another take on the town’s four-centuries-old sweet tradition—I’m reminded how a simple drink can build a liquid bridge between the past and the present.

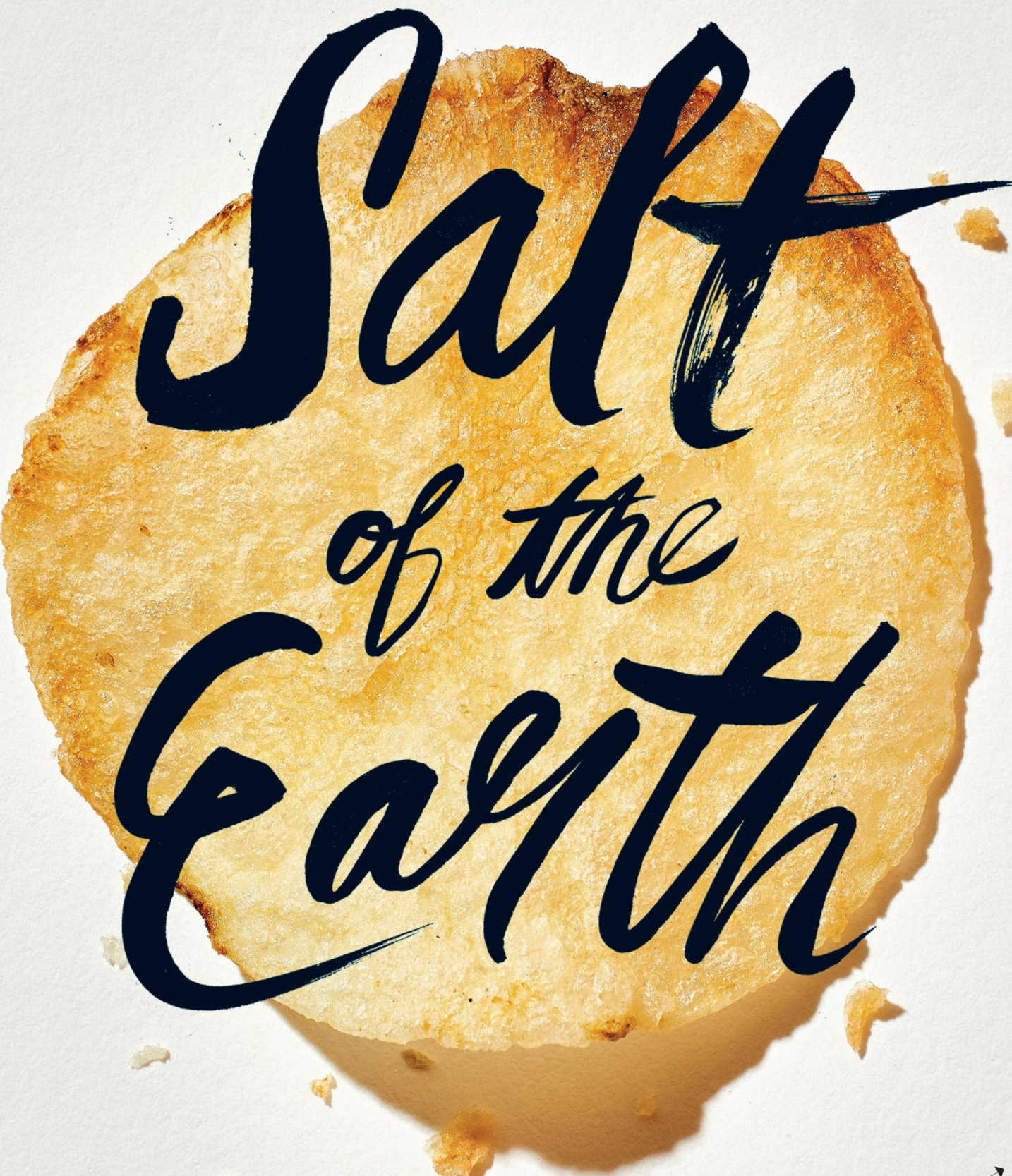
My final epiphany is simple, as epiphanies go: Chocolate is much more than an indulgence in Bayonne. It’s a way of life.



NAT GEO TOUR

Explore Bayonne and other Basque sites on the National Geographic Expedition “Culture and Cuisine From Oporto to Basque Country,” natgeoexpeditions.com/basquecountry

Cocoa connoisseur CEIL MILLER BOUCHET (@ceilbouchet) has previously called the Bordeaux region home. This was the first visit to Bayonne for photographer BRIAN FINKE (@brianfinke), who made sure to bring chocolate treats home for friends.



Salt of the Earth

The universally munched snack food takes on global flavors.
Turn the page to test your potato chip knowledge.

BY HANNAH SHEINBERG • PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTIAN LALONDE
ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLAIRE McCracken

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Dip into your chip smarts to guess where these flavors are from.

Pickle ①

Ketchup ③

Whisky & Haggis ②



Aji (chili Pepper) ⑥

Octopus ⑤



Flamin' Hot ⑨



Spicy Cheese ⑧

yogurt & Herbs ⑩



KEY
1. Russia (Lay's) 2. Scotland (Mackie's of Scotland) 3. Canada (Old Dutch) 4. China (Lay's) 5. Korea (Nongshim) 6. Peru (Lay's) 7. England (Walkers) 8. Japan (Nissin) 9. Mexico (Sabritas) 10. Turkey (Lay's) 11. India (Lay's) 12. Brazil (Lay's)



Call them chips or call them crisps—whatever you call them, these humble snacks are the crunch heard around the world. Potato chips are the affordable souvenir that can be scooped up at a bodega, vending machine, or train terminal. The flavor, however, varies by location. Ali Payne, vice president of global snacks innovation at PepsiCo, explains how cultural cravings affect seasonings. If travelers want to eat like a local, look no further than inside a shiny bag.

WHY ARE SOME FLAVORS SO POPULAR AROUND THE WORLD?

Most are popular because of their familiar profiles, like *picanha* (beef) in Brazil, masala in India, and barbecue in the U.S., while other flavors, like cucumber in China, are popular because they're unexpected. Even within the U.S., there are regional preferences: Limón on the West Coast, salt and vinegar on the East Coast, and spicy flavors in the South.

WHEN CREATING CHIP FLAVORS FOR VARIOUS COUNTRIES, WHAT FACTORS DO YOU CONSIDER?

While we keep a close eye on emerging flavor trends, local cuisines are the tastes that resonate most. In our Do Us a Flavor program, where we invite consumers to invent new Lay's flavors, we've seen time and again that preferences are largely in line with local comfort food. In the U.K., winning flavors include pulled pork in a barbecue sauce and Builder's Breakfast, which captures all of the elements of a full English breakfast, while in the U.S., winners include southern biscuits and gravy and cheesy garlic bread.

WHAT ARE THE EMERGING FLAVOR TRENDS?

We're definitely seeing flavor trends transfer from the restaurant world into snacks. Years ago you never would have seen sriracha on a chip, but the condiment has made its way into our restaurants, our kitchens, and our Lay's as one of the 2013 Do Us a Flavor finalists in the U.S. We're also seeing interest in ingredients from other countries, since people are increasingly exposed to flavors around the world through travel and social media.

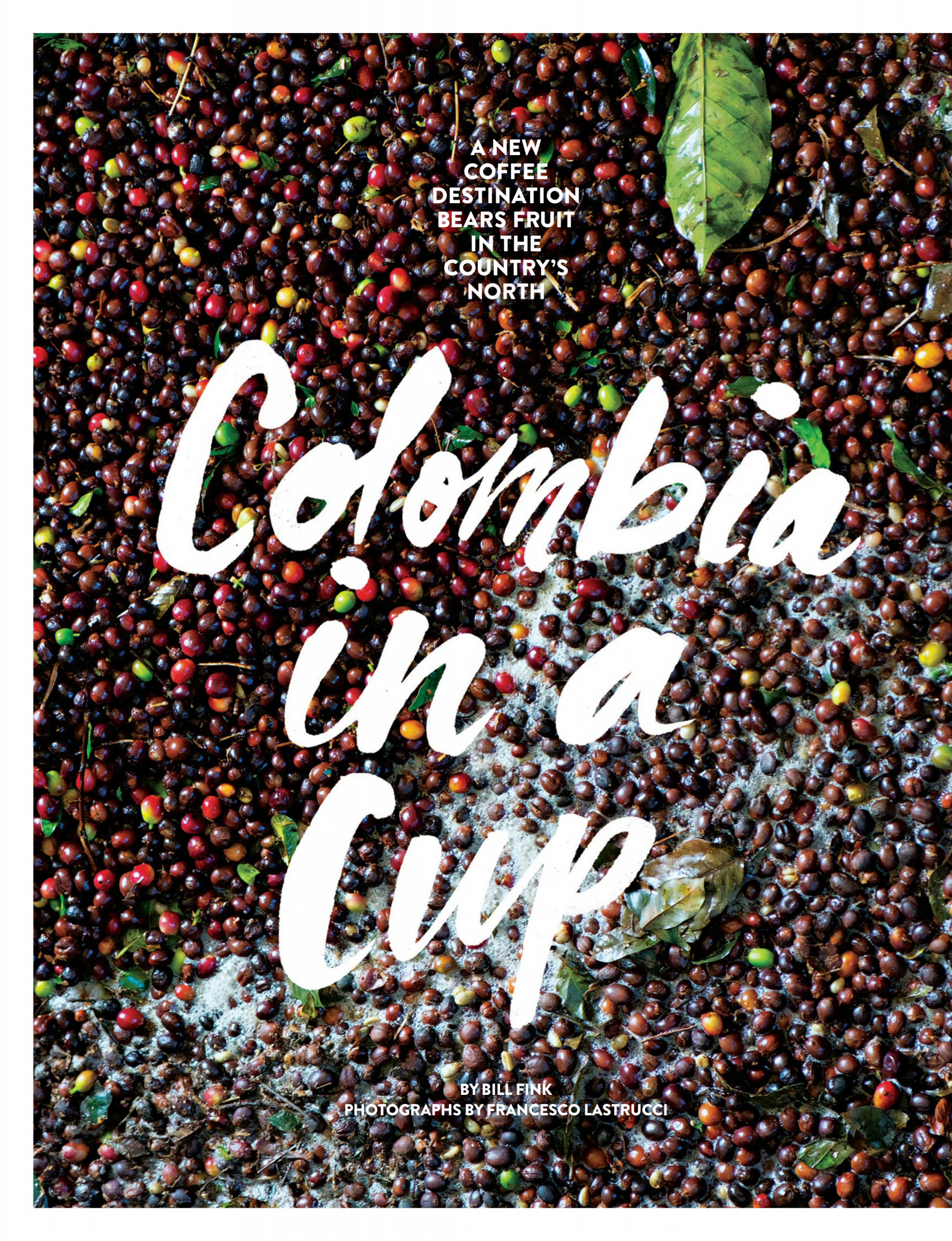
WHICH COUNTRY FAVORS THE SPICIEST FLAVORS?

Mexico has the spiciest flavors in their portfolio. However, we continue to see the spice trend grow globally.

WHAT GOES IN TO RESEARCHING A NEW POTATO CHIP FLAVOR?

Once we decide on a flavor, our chefs create dozens of versions of the dish to identify the ideal flavor profile, which they then replicate on a chip. It can take four or five months to develop and perfect the new flavor.

■ FOR MORE ON CHIPS AROUND THE WORLD, VISIT NATGEOTRAVEL.COM.



A NEW
COFFEE
DESTINATION
BEARS FRUIT
IN THE
COUNTRY'S
NORTH

Colombia in a Cup

BY BILL FINK
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANCESCO LASTRUCCI



A local harvest of organically grown coffee fruit eventually ends up as a drink to linger over at Ikaro Café, in Santa Marta.

Something is brewing

in the small Colombian town of Minca. It smells of caramel, bark, charcoal, and chocolate. The source? Coffee beans, fresh from backyard roasters, their sharp burnt odor cutting through the humid tropical haze.

Here in northern Colombia, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta range rises straight from the shores of the Caribbean. Long left undeveloped due to political troubles, this now peaceful area draws urban Colombians and savvy international visitors to the palm-fringed beaches of Tayrona National Park, the ancient archaeological site of Ciudad Perdida, and the birding paradise of the jungles around Minca.

Recently, Minca and the Sierra Nevada have begun to attract coffee-loving travelers, a collection of connoisseurs and curious backpackers eager to discover what Juan Pablo Campos, general manager of the Lohas Beans trade group, calls “the most important Colombian region for organic coffee.”

While coffee is not native to Colombia, the plant has flourished for centuries on the country’s steep, shade-covered mountains, with rainfall, altitude, and temperatures ideal for growing the mellow, medium-bodied arabica-style bean. Colombia has been exporting coffee since the early 1800s, and

in 2015 alone shipped 840,000 tons of coffee beans. Represented by the fictional ambassadors Juan Valdez and his trusty burro, Conchita, “Café de Colombia” has become known worldwide.

Colombia’s better-known “coffee triangle” in the country’s southwest now supports a well-trod tourist track between luxury lodges and standardized plantation tours, but the Sierra Nevada still offers an authentic journey into the past—and a taste of the future of Colombian coffee. In remote highlands, indigenous tribes of Kogi and Arhuaco lead the way in organic coffee production, developing a sustainable farming network that combines traditional spiritual beliefs with modern planting knowledge. These farms embrace generations-old techniques and tools to produce sought-after organic blends, with many beans “triple certified” as organic, fair trade, and rain forest-friendly.

The gateway to the region is the sunny Caribbean seaside city of Santa Marta, where the bitter street blend of *tinto* (from the Spanish word for ink) black coffee is sweetened with spoonfuls of sugar. Coffee aficionados will skip the *tinto*, as well as the ubiquitous Juan Valdez chain stores, and head to Santa Marta’s smaller shops, such as Ikaro Café.

Exploring the area’s coffee culture is best done during harvest season, from about November through February, and can be as simple as hiring a taxi for the approximately 40-minute, 15-mile bumpy ride from the sea to the hills. Visits to tribal lands require special permission or an organized trip from an approved local operator such as Wiwa Tour.

A stop at Hacienda la Victoria above Minca is like traveling to 1892, when the farm was founded. Husband-and-wife owners Micky and Claudia Weber provide a bean-to-brew education on growing, processing, and roasting coffee. Visitors will see the same well-oiled machinery in use since the farm’s beginnings: water-powered generators, gravity-driven sorters, and hand-cranked presses. Tours conclude with a tasting of their blends, often accompanied by homemade apple pie. Other local farms promote scheduled and drop-in tours and tastings of high-end coffees—a difference from only a few years ago when Colombia had an unofficial policy of “export the best, and drink the rest.”

Drinking a good cup of coffee is just the beginning of a trip to Minca, where swaths of coffee beans dry on streetside tarps



At Hacienda la Victoria, owner Claudia Weber inhales the robust aroma of freshly washed and dried coffee beans.



Using a pestle, Minca coffee grower Angel Maria Orozco peels the hard outer skin of dried coffee beans.

in season. Hiking trails wind through Sierra Nevada rain forest to the Marinka and Pozo Azul waterfalls. Hundreds of butterfly and bird species native to the area include “parrots so plentiful they’re like pigeons,” according to one visitor.

Minca plantations may flash back a few generations, but indigenous Kogi farms (or those of the more remote Arhuaco), located deeper in the mountains, are a journey back centuries. The tribes live without electricity in traditional adobe huts with thatched roofs. They often carry their *mochila* (handwoven knapsacks) and wear homespun cotton clothing, white to symbolize the purity of nature. Their traditional conical headgear represents sacred snowcapped mountain peaks. Their *mamos* (spiritual guides) perform purification ceremonies of prayer and song prior to planting and harvesting the beans.

It all works in harmony with the land, their neighbors, and modern markets, nurturing a future model not only for growing coffee but for ripening Colombian tourism itself.

BILL FINK ([@finktravels](#)) can often be found with a fresh cup of *Colombia Luminosa* in Oakland, California. Italy-based **FRANCESCO LASTRUCCI** ([@francescolastrucci](#)) travels to Colombia frequently. He says, “It’s almost a second home to me.”



WHERE TO STAY

Ecohabs Tayrona

Thatched seaside bungalows designed by a local architect nestle in Tayrona National Park. [ecohab santamarta.com](#)

La Brisa Loca

At this social Santa Marta hostel, friendships form at the courtyard pool and the rooftop bar. [labrisaloca.com](#)

Casa Loma Minca

The view from the top is worth the climb up the long flight of stairs to this Minca hostel on a hill. [casalomaminca.com](#)

An authentic journey into the past – and a taste of the future of Colombian Coffee

A Kogi farmer
in El Trompito,
an indigenous
community on
the outskirts of
Tayrona National
Park, harvests
mature coffee.





WHERE TO GET A CUP OF JOE

Ikaro Café

Local organic coffee, vegan and vegetarian fare, and a bright interior make this one of the best hangouts in Santa Marta. ikarocafe.com

Tienda Café

Fans of this classic Minca spot savor their cups of local roasts (and a brownie) outside on the porch, but head inside for a trove of handicrafts for sale.

Hacienda la Victoria

Enjoy *un café* at its source at this 124-year-old family-owned coffee plantation, which also offers tours and an on-site bistro. lavictoriacoffee.wordpress.com

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A 12-day itinerary includes the country's south-eastern coffee triangle and Tayrona National Park. natgeoexpeditions.com/colombia



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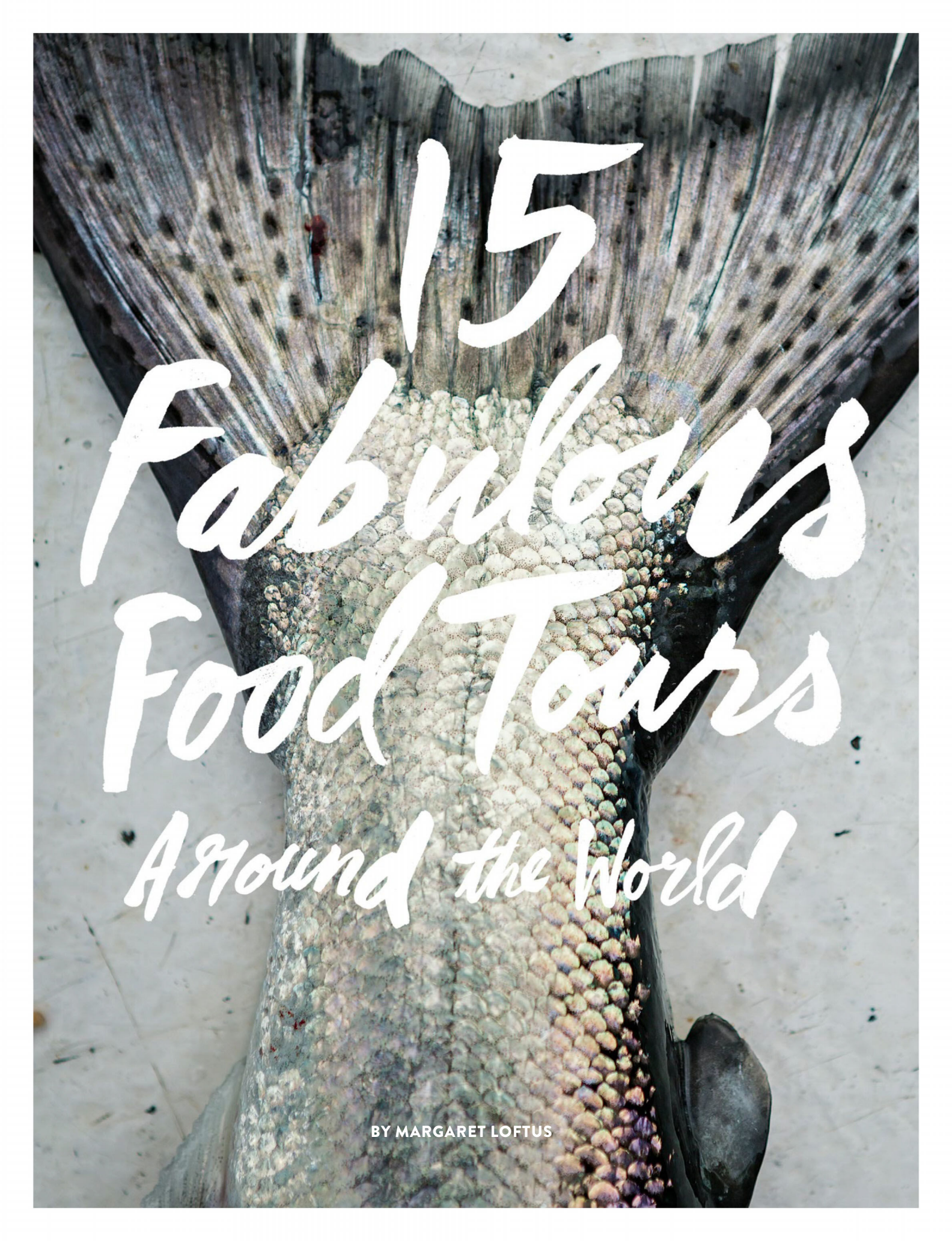
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15 Fabulous Food Tours Around the World

BY MARGARET LOFTUS

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to a global tour of flavors with these 15 food itineraries, from a half-day stroll through the craft breweries of Asheville, North Carolina, to nine chocolate- and cheese-filled days in the mountains and lakeside towns of Switzerland. The only prerequisite: a healthy appetite.

North America

ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Craft Beer Calling

Combine mineral-rich mountain water and a cool-kid community hopped up on the latest in artisanal suds, and you have craft beer mecca Asheville. With more than 25 breweries, this mountain town makes finding a favorite ale daunting. Guide Cliff Mori leads beer enthusiasts on walking tours of the small-batch brewers in the downtown South Slope area. Come thirsty: You'll try seven to ten beers, from IPAs to barrel-aged sour beers. *"Brewery Tours of Asheville," Brew-Ed, 2 hours \$37, or 3 hours \$50. brew-ed.com*

KENAI PENINSULA, ALASKA

Backcountry Bounty

Alaska's Kenai Peninsula is the land of king salmon, Kachemak Bay oysters, and a wide variety of wild edibles, from berries to mushrooms to seaweed. Visit a bivalve farm, forage in a forest of Sitka spruce trees, and learn to cook such local dishes as salmon bacon in rhubarb lacquer with chef Kirsten Dixon of the Tutka Bay Lodge, a National Geographic Unique Lodge of the World. *"Tutka Bay Lodge Culinary Retreat," Within the Wild, 4 days, \$2,185. withinthewild.com*

OAXACA, MEXICO

Fiesta Fare

Chef Susana Trilling shows off the flavorful heritage of Oaxaca, her adopted home, by guiding cultural tours and leading classes in everything from making *queso* to mastering mole sauces. Her seven-day "Día de Muertos" course combines culinary lessons with field trips to learn about Day of the Dead customs. *"Día de Muertos Course," Seasons of My Heart, 7 days, \$2,300. seasonsofmyheart.com*

Caribbean

CUBA

Cuisine Revolution

Cuba has been forging new culinary paths and celebrating its traditional foods as it opens its doors to the wider world. This gastronomic survey of the island samples the Cuban-Mediterranean fare at Atelier, a *paladar*, or privately owned restaurant, in Havana's Vedado neighborhood, and such plates as seafood-papaya lasagna at the paladar La Guarida. Work up an appetite between bites by learning salsa moves from a local pro and how to make the perfect daiquiri with a bartender at the famed El Floridita. A bonus: Your ride is a '57 Chevy. *"Cuba Culinary Tour," Access Trips, 8 days, \$3,190. accesstrips.com*

South America

CHILE

Chilling With Master Chefs

Lauded in the food world as the latest star in South America's culinary constellation, Chile finally is getting the love it deserves. Find out what the fuss is about on one of a series of tours inspired by the television series *MasterChef*. Browse the Central Market in the capital city, Santiago, where you can try conger eel chowder that inspired Pablo Neruda's ode to *caldillo de congrio*; sip Carménère wine in the cowboy country of the Colchagua Valley; and cook lunch with Chilean food ambassador Pilar Rodriguez. *"Chilean Wine and Cuisine: Inspired by MasterChef," Cox & Kings, 9 days, \$4,995. coxandkingsusa.com*

Europe

SWITZERLAND

Say Cheese—and Chocolate

Travel from the 800-year-old lakeside town of Lucerne to the ski resort of Zermatt for an immersion in Alpine culture and cuisine, including a visit to Maison Cailler, the home of Switzerland's oldest milk chocolate brand; a tour of the walled medieval cheese village of Gruyères; and a raclette tasting at the 16th-century Château de Villa, east of Geneva in the canton of Valais. *"Cheese, Chocolate, and the Scenic Alps," Alpenwild, 9 days, \$3,795. alpenwild.com*

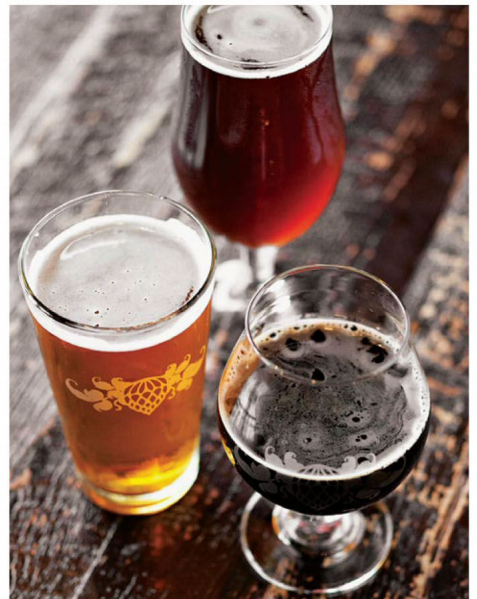
CROATIA, SLOVENIA, ITALY

Where Great Flavors Converge

A series of treks from Zagreb, Croatia, to Venice, Italy, traverses one of the richest culinary corners of Europe. Highlights include the Istrian Peninsula, known for its olive oil and truffles, and the Collio wine country that straddles the hills of Slovenia and Italy, famous for its bottles of big reds. Also on the itinerary: day-trips to the Škocjan Caves, a World Heritage site, and Slovenia's capital of cool, Ljubljana. *"Istria to Venice: A Culinary Route," Mountain Travel Sobek, 9 days, \$4,595. mtsobek.com*



Savoring the world (clockwise from top left): The entrance to the Anna Tasca Lanza cooking school frames views of Sicily's countryside; Fabrizia Lanza, Anna's daughter, often leads classes on preserving tomatoes; the colorful Jack of the Wood pub, in Asheville, North Carolina, is known for Green Man ales; craft beers crowd a table at Asheville's Wicked Weed Brewing; sidewalk fare in Hoi An, Vietnam, includes an array of tropical fruits; "white rose" shrimp dumplings are a Hoi An special; fireweed blazes on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula; menu items at Kenai's Tutka Bay Lodge include beignets of king crab with aioli sauce.





Mint tea (left) is poured from on high in Fes, Morocco, to form a surface foam. Tilework (right) decorates the Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail, in nearby Meknès, a town known for its wineries.



SICILY, ITALY

Tomato Queen

The Anna Tasca Lanza cooking school, based in a farmstead east of Palermo, has been teaching the finer points of Sicilian cooking for more than 25 years. Fabrizia Lanza offers a workshop around that Italian kitchen staple, tomato paste. Breaks from canning include jaunts to a local cheesemaker and a coffee roaster. “*Preserving August*,” Anna Tasca Lanza Sicilian Cooking Experience, 6 days, \$2,500. annatascalanza.com

GEORGIA

Toasting the Caucasus

With its ancient winemaking culture and hearty cuisine anchored by *khachapuri* (cheese-stuffed bread) and *khinkali* (brothy meat dumplings), the republic of Georgia has been wooing visitors to the Caucasus Mountains. This itinerary explores four regions of the country, including the wine country of Kakheti, where ceramists make *qvevri*, the huge earthenware vessels used to ferment wines. “*A Taste of Georgia: Wine, Cuisine & Culture*,” MIR Corporation, 12 days, \$4,795. mircorp.com

Asia

HONG KONG

The Ways of Wonton

Traveler contributor Daisann McLane designs private food tours (three people max) that reveal the culinary nuances of such culturally vibrant Hong Kong neighborhoods as Wan Chai, Sheung Wan, and Sham Shui Po. Tastes run from egg custard tarts to pork and dim sum. *Little Adventures in Hong Kong*, 4 hours, \$115. littleadventuresinhongkong.com

INDIA

Curry in Context

Spectacular sites such as the Taj Mahal combine with flavor-packed dishes on this “real food adventure” that has you sampling *parathas* (flatbreads), *chaat* snacks, and Goan fish curry; preparing a traditional meal in Udaipur; and visiting a spice farm in Goa. “*Real Food Adventure: India*,” Intrepid Travel, 15 days, from \$2,170. intrepidtravel.com

HOI AN, VIETNAM

To Market to Market

Hoi An, a town on Vietnam’s central coast, is considered one of the country’s

food hubs. Learn why on a guided walk through the Tan An markets, meeting vendors and tasting *dau hu*, a warm tofu custard served with ginger syrup, and *sinh to trai cay*, a shake made with fruit, condensed milk, and ice. “*The Original Taste of Hoi An Food Tour*,” Taste of Hoi An, 4 hours, \$65. tasteofhoian.com

JAPAN

Sashimi and You

Ask worldly chefs to name their favorite food city, and the answer always seems to be Tokyo. Japan’s capital bookends this private food-centric odyssey that includes sake tastings in the old town of Takayama, picking tea leaves in Kyoto Prefecture, and a crash course in ramen prep in Osaka. “*Japanese Culinary Exploration*,” Global Basecamps, 14 days, \$9,378. globalbasecamps.com

Africa

FES, MOROCCO

Medina Dining

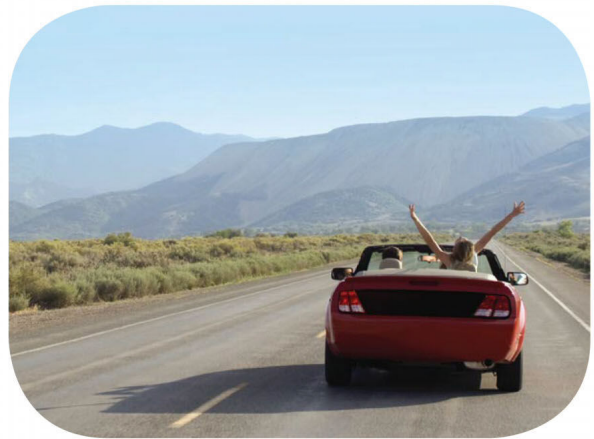
Your base is a traditional *riad* (courtyard residence) in the old quarter of Fes, Morocco’s cultural heart. From here, explore Roman ruins and the Berber town of Azrou when not cooking North African classics such as *tagine*, couscous, and *zaalouk*, a dip made with eggplants and tomatoes. “*A Feast for the Senses in Morocco*,” International Kitchen, 7 days, \$2,550. theinternationalkitchen.com

WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

Bikes and Bottles

This cycling tour of the wine country outside Cape Town routes you to producers in Robertson Valley and the Stellenbosch region, such as Kanonkop, known for its Pinotage. Also on offer: a visit to the Klipdrift brandy distillery and a whale-watching excursion. “*Cycling South Africa’s Winelands: The Cape’s Boutique Producers*,” Immersion Journeys, 7 days, from \$3,295. immersionjourneys.com

Contributing editor MARGARET LOFTUS (@pegloftus) lives in Charleston, S.C.



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This grassroots nonprofit has worked steadfastly to build a "conservation economy" in rural central Mexico.

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Winner: TIME Unlimited Tours, New Zealand

This creative Auckland-based ecotourism operator focuses on bringing authentic Maori culture to the forefront of their guest experience.

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Recognizing that protecting the natural environment means involving the local population, Bushcamp works closely with communities to improve rural livelihoods.

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State of **WONDER**

EVERYTHING IS SCALED UP IN ALASKA—PERHAPS NOWHERE MORE THAN IN
DENALI NATIONAL PARK, HOME TO NORTH AMERICA'S HIGHEST PEAK

By Jeff Rennie Photographs by Aaron Huey



Ice-blue waters flow down Ruth Glacier, one of 40 named glaciers in Denali. A Dall ram (right) suns on a rock framed by ribbons of the Toklat River. "Patient visitors will spot rams from the road," says photographer Aaron Huey.

Dawn.

The zipper on my tent is stiff with frost and the early light seems as brittle as the ice on the edge of the river where I camp. Fresh snow powders the shoulders of the Alaska Range, pink now against the sunrise. I stretch on this new morning in Denali National Park and head toward the portable stove to make coffee.

Each year, thousands of visitors come to this huge swath of Alaskan wilderness 240 miles north of Anchorage. They come to check off its must-dos, from picking blueberries along the shores of Wonder Lake, with its view of 20,310-foot-high Denali—the continent's highest peak—reflected in the mirrored lake water, to scoping the Toklat flats for wolves, caribou, and bears, to hiking all or some of the scenic Triple Lakes Trail. But at six million acres, the equivalent of three Yellowstone or eight Yosemite, Denali is so much more than guided walks or photo possibilities. Its backcountry offers hikers with permits the chance to get out, go deep, and experience raw wilderness. Park shuttle buses ply the 92-mile Denali Park Road. Flag one down and it will drop you off almost anywhere along its route for your very own walk into the wild.

Designated a national park in 1917, Denali challenges superlatives. It wears easily such titles as tallest and grandest. Though its open terrain can make it appear accessible—the highest peaks, on a clear day, are visible from Fairbanks, 120 miles northeast—appearances in Alaska can deceive. Fast-moving glacial rivers slice through the backcountry, leading to some treacherous river crossings. A ridge that seems close enough to touch can be a day's hike away. It soon becomes clear that this is echo-swallowing, border-defying, leave-you-weak-in-the-knees frontier country.

In such a place, wildness and beauty are



Hop, skip, jump:
A hiker pole dances
across ice pads
dotting a glacial
pool. "The ice's gray
coating comes from
dirt blowing off
the surrounding
mountains," notes
photographer Huey.





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not constrained. Halfway to the portable stove, I stop. Pressed into the mud between the river and my tent is a fresh paw print. I kneel and place my hand in its large outline. While I slept, a grizzly bear stepped here.

I'll hike for more than a week on this trip, my sixth in the park, watch what appear to be puffs of summer clouds transform magically into Dall sheep on a distant hillside, hear wolf howls drift on the wind like flute music. But in Denali, "heaven," to borrow a line from Henry David Thoreau, "is under our feet as well as over our heads." Standing in the grizzly track, I turn in a slow circle—and take in the glory around me. This loftiest of national parks yields beauty in every step.

JEFF RENNICKE wrote *National Geographic's* book, *Treasures of Alaska: Last Great American Wilderness*. Photographer AARON HUEY (@argonautphoto) spent months in Denali.



Crowned by clouds, North America's king of summits, Denali (formerly called Mount McKinley), lords over nearby peaks. "It's a transcendent thing," Huey says. Multicolor plants blanket Polychrome Pass (top), drawing a hungry grizzly.

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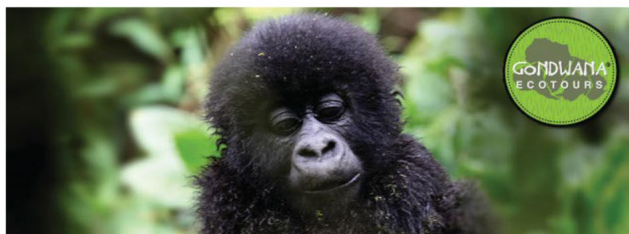


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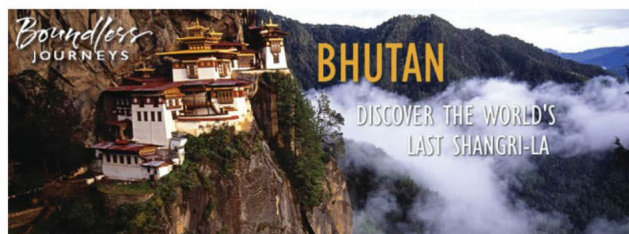
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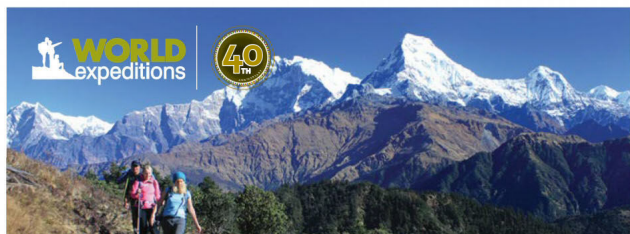
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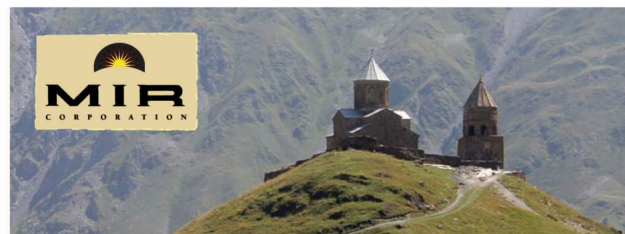
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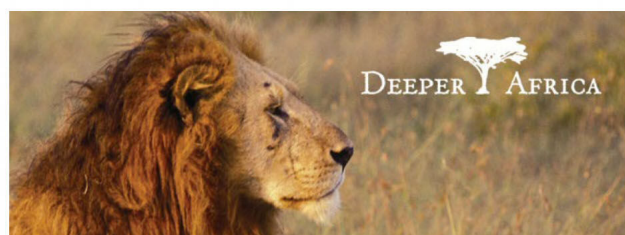
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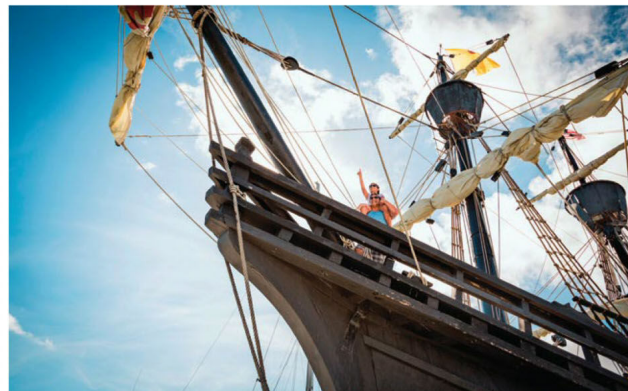


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